

# RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN LIBRARY



*Reg. No*

*Clas. No.*

1361  
VIII - B



Viceregal Library.

*Date*







**PRESIDENT'S SECRETARIAT**  
(LIBRARY)

Accn. No.....

Class No.....

The book should be returned on or before the date  
last stamped below.

|

|

|

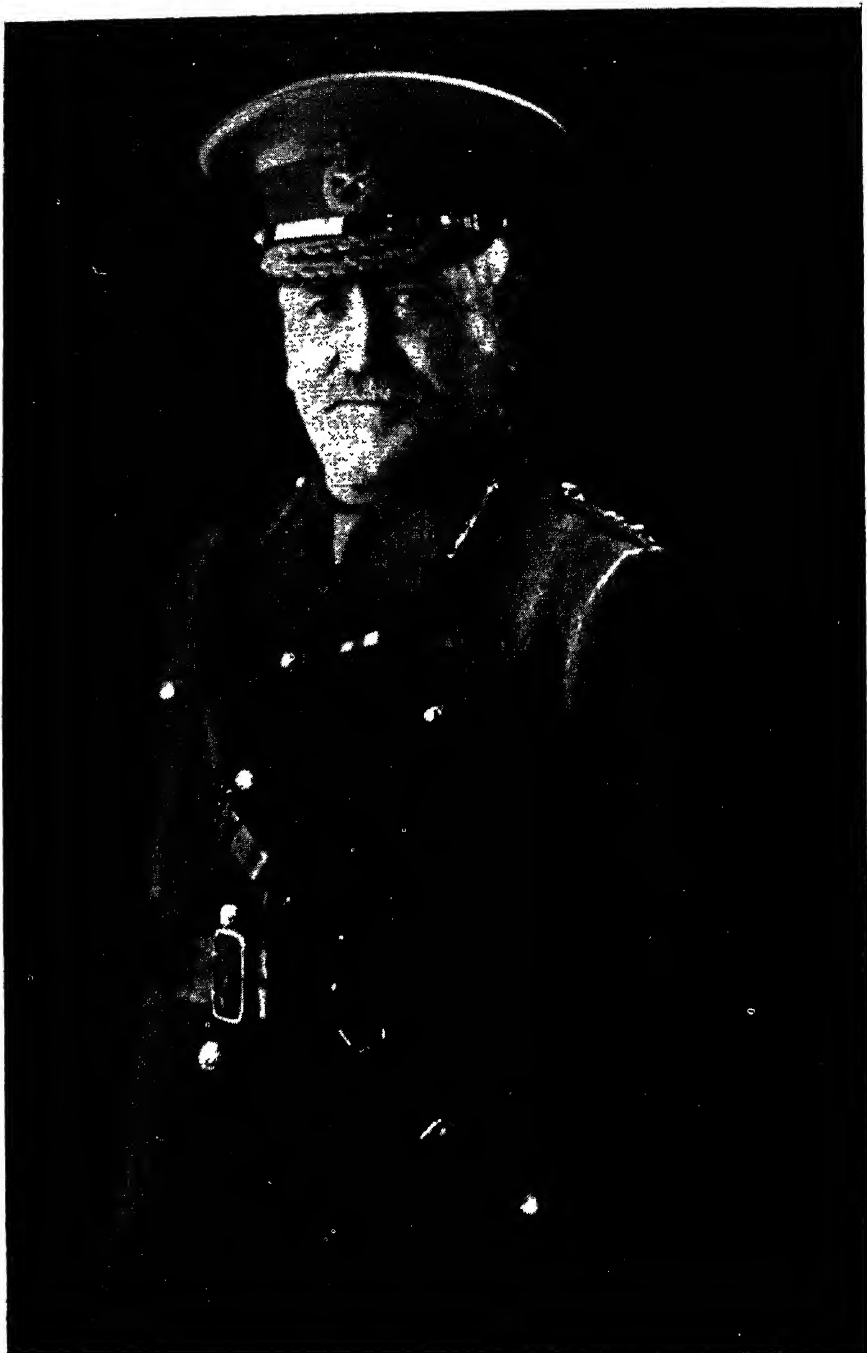


—

*The Life of General  
Sir Charles Carmichael Monro*







GENERAL SIR CHARLES MONRO, Br., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G.

*The Life of General  
Sir Charles Carmichael Monro*

*BART., G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G.*

*by*

*General Sir George Barrow*

*G.C.B., K.C.M.G.*

*Colonel 14/20th Hussars and 14th P.W.O. Scinde Horse.*

*With a Foreword by*

*Field Marshal Viscount Plumer*

*G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.F.O. C.B.E.*

*ILLUSTRATED*

*London*

*HUTCHINSON & CO. (Publishers) LTD.*



—

“ To be as he was, is indeed, subject of panegyric enough to any man in this state of being ; but in every picture there should be shade as well as light ; and when I delineate him without resolve, I do what he himself recommended, both by his precept and his example.”

BOSWELL'S *Life of Johnson*.

—

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

**M**Y thanks are due to Viscount Chelmsford for valuable information concerning military administrative measures undertaken in India during his Viceroyalty; and to the following gentlemen for permission to quote from their writings or from the publications for which they are respectively responsible:—

Mr. Winston Churchill (*The World Crisis*); Mr. Ian Colvin (*The Life of General Dyer*); the Editor of *The Times*; the Director of the Military Branch, Historical Section, Committee of Imperial Defence; the Comptroller, H.M. Government Stationery Office (Dardanelles Commission report and report of Committee on the Punjab Disturbances, 1919); The Secretary, Army Department, Government of India.

I gratefully acknowledge the information which has been given me by several of Sir Charles Monro's personal friends. I am much indebted to Mr. R. Tharle Hughes, O.B.E., for the great assistance I have received from him in the collection of information, revising of proofs and other matters connected with the writing of this biography.

---



# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER I

	PAGE
The object of recording the life of Charles Monro. The Monro family. School and college days. Joins The Queen's. First years in the Army. South Africa. Appointed Chief Instructor at Hythe. Shows little indication of possessing exceptional qualities . . . . .	17

## CHAPTER II

A soldier's contribution to Victory not always made on the battle-field. The contribution made by Monro at Hythe. Evidences of the Great War. Monro the founder of modern infantry fire tactics. The results of inadequate machine-gun armament. Musketry training prior to South African War. Opposition to Monro's innovations. Monro's work as chief instructor. Fire is everything and tactics change every ten years. Monro's work as Commandant. The Monro doctrine. Hythe the commencement of Monro's career. Is appointed to command a brigade. Is appointed to command a Territorial division. Marriage .	27
--	----

## CHAPTER III

Monro appointed to command 2nd Division, August, 1914. His feelings regarding the War. His opinion of politicians who declared war was unthinkable. Senseless condemnation of war by certain writers. Monro's qualities as divisional commander. A French appreciation. Havoc at Hooze Château. A midnight scene, October, 1914. Recommends leave for all ranks. Hazebrouck. Succeeds Haig in command of 1st Corps. Hinges, Béthune, and Choques. K.C.B. Incident concerning Prince of Wales. Opinions. Incident at Béthune. Command of Third Army. Beauquesne. Pétain. Regimental Bands. Official correspondence. Appointed to command at Gallipoli <i>vice</i> Ian Hamilton	40
---	----

## CHAPTER IV

Gallipoli project ill-considered and ill-prepared. The means did not exist to carry it through. Wellington's views on a similar project. Cabinet dazzled by magnitude of object, but in war nothing so bad as failure and defeat. War Office opinion in 1906. Ignored by Cabinet. Soldiers and politicians. Mr. Churchill's brave words. The essentials for success of an overseas expedition. Ian Hamilton's report on landing. Deficiencies in preparation. 1882 a contrast. Monro's interviews with authorities in London. Lord Northcliffe and intelligence. Monro's instructions. His report. Comments. It is the fruits of Victory, not the Victory, which count. Effect of report on War Committee. Policy and Strategy. Lord Kitchener's attitude. Opinion of corps commanders. Strong opposition to evacuation. Apprehension regarding effect on Muhammadans. Kitchener's wire to Birdwood. Monro virtually superseded. Kitchener goes to Gallipoli. Changes his views after personal inspection. Conferences. Monro breaks his ankle. Kitchener's report. Churchill's strictures. Comments . . . . .	52
--	----

## CHAPTER V

PAGE

Kitchener recommends evacuation of Suvla and Anzac and retention of Helles. Comments. General Staff and War Committee advise evacuation of whole Peninsula. Cabinet still hesitate. Lord Curzon's fears. The November gale. Monro appeals for early decision. Kitchener wavers. Monro remains firm. Bonar Law's memorandum. Salonika question forces a decision. Comments. Monro's courage. Admiral Wemyss opposes evacuation. Admiralty reply. A general fights on two fronts. General Monro discomfits Mr. Churchill. A conflict of personalities . . . . . 86

## CHAPTER VI

Salonika. Ostensible reasons for retaining Helles. Monro's views. General Staff memorandum. Cabinet gives consent to evacuation of Helles. German opinions. Monro's general plan for evacuation. The time factor. Suvla and Anzac evacuated. Cabinet looks both ways at same time. Monro's ideas on evacuation of Helles. Peninsula completely evacuated. Monro's praise of others. Mr. Asquith announces accomplishment of the evacuation. Opinions regarding possibility of success if offensive resumed with accession of fresh troops. Losses sustained during re-embarkation. Comments. Monro leaves Egypt. Incident during voyage to England . . . . . 95

## CHAPTER VII

Monro assumes command of First Army in France. First Army Headquarters. Visits from Joffre, Clemenceau, and Archbishop of Canterbury. A letter. Chaplains. Service at Béthune. Colonel Repington. A letter. A French description. A dentist's painful experience. Misunderstandings. Monro as a Commander. His ideas on raids. His sympathy with young officers. His influence flows down many channels. Is asked to go to India . . . . . 106

## CHAPTER VIII

Monro assumes command in India. Indian national characteristics. Discipline. Dual rôle of the Army in India. Expeditions prior to Great War. Strength of forces in 1914. India's assistance in the event of the Empire being involved in war. Contingents supplied by India in 1914. Monro's great task. His personal sacrifice. Sir Beauchamp Duff. Monro's first act. King's Commissions for Indians. Clubs. Decentralization. Status of A.G.'s and Q.M.G.'s departments raised. Reconstitution of commands. Inspections . . . . . 115

## CHAPTER IX

The Recruiting problem. Co-operation between the Civil and Military. Demand for more men to meet requirements of Mesopotamia and other spheres. Free rations for Indian troops. The Central Recruiting Board. Supply of officers for Indian Army. Expansion of Indian Army Reserve of Officers. Recruitments. Demand for medical officers and personnel. Expansion of railway. Inland Water Transport. Ordnance and other technical services. Raising of Mechanical Transport Units. Labour Corps. The Munitions Board . . . . . 135

# CONTENTS

II

## CHAPTER X

PAGE

Mesopotamia. Control of operations by War Office. Views of C.I.G.S. and General Maude on strategical situations. Monro's opinion asked for. He arrives at Basra and inspects communications. Telegraphs his opinion to C.I.G.S. Sir William Robertson concurs. Maude expresses his satisfaction with Monro's visit . . . . .	153
--	-----

## CHAPTER XI

Arrival in India. Formation of cadet college and training schools. Mesopotamia continues to absorb attention. The advance on Baghdad following Monro's opinion. Further reinforcements for Mesopotamia. Formation of Labour Corps for France. Operations against the Mahsuds. The Indian Defence Force. British Government asks India to redouble her efforts. The Response. Formation of a Central Recruiting Board and a Central Employment and Labour Board. Results. Improvement of frontier communications. Construction of new roads and bridges. Establishment of air routes. Additions to mechanical transport. School for M.T. drivers. Introduction of General Hospital system for Indian troops. Allenby's tribute. Summary of India's effort. Question of unifying commands in Eastern Theatre of War . . . . .	160
---	-----

## CHAPTER XII

Monro criticized for his attitude in Dyer case. The Defence of India and Rowlatt Acts. Gandhi. The Hunter Committee. The Punjab disturbances. Occasions of firing which were approved by Government of India. Dyer's proclamation. Description of Jallianwala Bagh. Brigadier General Dyer's action at Jallianwala Bagh. A deceptive mental picture. Dyer acted rightly in opening fire. The points at issue. Firing without a warning. The law on the subject. Dyer justified in dispersing the crowd. Dyer's evidence. His intention to kill as many as possible, in order to create an impression. Many innocent villagers killed. Comments. Sir Michael O'Dwyer's opinions. Dyer's statements after leaving India at variance with previous evidence. Analysis of his defence. Mr. Justice McCardie's opinions. The Crawling Order. Dyer ordered to resign. No bias in mind of authorities against firing when necessary. Comments. Did Dyer save Punjab, or India? Comments. Opinion of Clémenceau. Dyer's future professional career unaffected by order to resign . . . . .	177
--	-----

## CHAPTER XIII

The <i>Life of General Dyer</i> . Lines of attack. Comments. The Connaught Rangers. The application of the minimum force. Circumstances which justify an officer in firing. Conditions which, if observed, safeguard the officer who opens fire on mob. Mistaken historical analogies. Sir Henry Wilson's opinions. Dyer and the divisional command. Criticisms of Monro not justified by facts. Dyer's ineligibility for promotion. Monro and the Third Afghan War. What Lord Roberts would have done. Dyer's over-zealous apologists. The shadow of Amritsar . . . . .	209
--	-----

## CHAPTER XIV

PAGE

Sir Hamilton Grant's appreciation. The Third Afghan War. Adverse conditions. A notable achievement. Conduct of the war criticized. A difficult situation. Monro's praise of subordinates and ruling chiefs. Trouble in Waziristan. Sir Henry Dobbs' appreciation. Monro the originator of the new frontier policy. Mr. Montagu. Snowden. Love of children. Report on Waziristan operations . . . . .	222
--	-----

## CHAPTER XV

Permanent nature of Monro's innovations. The Monro canteens. The Auxiliary Force and the Territorial Force. Reorganization of Indian Cavalry. Tours. Correspondence. Resigns appointment. <i>The Times</i> criticisms. Monro appointed Colonel of The Queen's. Lord Chelmsford's eulogy. Monro is thanked by Secretary of State and by Army Council. Presentation to Lady Monro. Sir Charles and Lady Monro leave India. Their arrival in London . . . . .	239
--	-----

## CHAPTER XVI

Monro appointed Governor of Gibraltar. His interest and improvements. The Calpé Hunt. Visit of Duke and Duchess of York. An accident. Tributes of affection from the inhabitants of Gibraltar. Appeal to Secretary of State for extension of Monro's tenure of appointment. Military service terminates with departure from Gibraltar. Monro's valuation of his services. Useful life in England. Visit of Crown Prince of Japan . . . . .	253
--	-----

## CHAPTER XVII

Colonel of The Queen's. Takes his duties seriously. Letters of Advice. Anecdote . . . . .	261
---	-----

## CHAPTER XVIII

A character study . . . . .	265
-----------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XIX

The last scene . . . . .	278
--------------------------	-----

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

GENERAL SIR CHARLES MONRO . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
CHARLES MONRO, AGED 7 . . . . .	FACING PAGE 32
CHARLES MONRO, AGED 19 . . . . .	48
SIR DOUGLAS HAIG AND SIR CHARLES MONRO. AUGUST 1914	56
BRITISH TROOPS MARCHING THROUGH A FRENCH VILLAGE .	64
BRIDGE OVER THE AISNE, 1914 . . . . .	72
ARMY, CORPS, AND DIVISIONAL COMMANDERS AND CHIEF STAFF OFFICERS OF THE THIRD ARMY, 1915 . . . . .	80
SIR CHARLES WITH LADY MONRO LEAVING THE WAR OFFICE	88
SIR CHARLES MONRO AT GALLIPOLI . . . . .	112
GALLIPOLI, THE LAST SCENE . . . . .	120
SIR CHARLES MONRO AND THE AUTHOR AT FIRST ARMY HEADQUARTERS, 1916 . . . . .	128
PARADE SERVICE IN THE SQUARE AT BETHUNE, 1916 . .	136
LADY MONRO . . . . .	144
SIR CHARLES MONRO AT SNOWDEN, SIMLA . . . . .	168
THE STAFF AT SNOWDEN . . . . .	184
AT FLAGSTAFF HOUSE, DELHI . . . . .	192
AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE, BOMBAY . . . . .	200
THE KHYBER, 1918 . . . . .	216
GROUP TAKEN AT DELHI DURING THE VISIT OF MR. MONTAGU TO INDIA . . . . .	224
PRESENTATION TO SIR CHARLES AND LADY MONRO BY GIBRALTAR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE . . . . .	232



EARL BEATTY, SIR ROGER KEYES, AND SIR CHARLES MONRO AT GIBRALTAR . . . . .	240
WITH THE CALPÉ HOUNDS, GIBRALTAR . . . . .	248
SIR CHARLES MONRO AFTER APPOINTMENT AS BATH KING- AT-ARMS . . . . .	256
SIR CHARLES MONRO, 1925 . . . . .	272

## FOREWORD

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BARROW has written an admirable account of the life and service of a typical soldier; for that is exactly what Charles Monro was. Sir George is in a specially favourable position to write the narrative as he served under Monro both in peace and war, as a staff officer, and as a subordinate commander, and much of what he has written was compiled from personal knowledge.

It is to be hoped that these pages will be perused by many readers and that in studying them they will realize that they are an apt illustration of what splendid services to his country can be rendered by a soldier like Monro; and it must be remembered that at the outset of his career he had no special advantages over his contemporaries, and that the promotions he gained, the high positions he filled, and the honours awarded to him were all due to personal merit and nothing else.

The four achievements, all different in character, with which his name will chiefly be associated are:

(1) The new and improved system of Infantry training, which was inaugurated under his auspices when he was Commandant of the School of Musketry at Hythe in 1903-7.

(2) His Command of the First and Third Armies in France, 1915-16.

(3) The decision to evacuate the positions at Gallipoli, and the successful accomplishment of that difficult and hazardous operation, 1916.

(4) The reforms and reorganization of the Army in India which he carried out while he was Commander-in-Chief in that country from 1916-20.

But it is not on these special achievements alone, great as they undoubtedly were, that the friends and admirers of Sir Charles Monro (and the two terms are synonymous) base his claim to a prominent place in the history of our times, but on the whole of his career, being as it was a splendid example of a great soldier's life, which exercised a wonderful influence over all with whom he came in contact.

This was due to the fact, that throughout the whole of his

life the keynote of his actions was a high sense of duty, and this inspired him to exercise on himself and to instil into others the spirit of true discipline, which is based on respect for superiors and sympathetic consideration for subordinates.

Certainly he was a man whose opinion always "counted"; even as a young man his advice was often sought and accepted by men older than himself because they knew that his views would be the result of careful study and thought, and for the same reason his decisions were always received without demur by his subordinates and his instructions carried out implicitly.

The chief characteristics of his work were earnestness and thoroughness, and the development of these can be traced in this biography, as he advanced step by step to positions of increasing responsibility, but these were always relieved by those flashes of boyish humour which made him such an attractive associate and companion.

His judgments were always sound, and no one could persuade him to say or do anything which he did not believe to be right or in accordance with the best interest of the service and country he loved so well and served so faithfully.

I think his personality can be best summed up by describing him as a soldier "*sans peur et sans reproche*."

The Army was richer for his life, and poorer by his death.

---

# THE LIFE OF GENERAL SIR CHARLES CARMICHAEL MONRO BART, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.M.G.

## CHAPTER I

The object of recording the life of Charles Monro. The Monro family. School and college days. Joins The Queen's. First years in the Army. South Africa. Appointed Chief Instructor at Hythe. Shows little indication of possessing exceptional qualities.

**I**N the profession of Arms a man's achievements are no sure indication of his character. In the law, in literature, in politics, in art, and in the business world, talent and industry, provided Fortune is not hostile, give a measured promise of success. But for the soldier and sailor there is no such assurance. The careers of Hannibal, Napoleon and Lee ended in failure. Had defeat come at the commencement, instead of at the conclusion, history would hardly have recorded their names.

There are others to whom the opportunity has never come. But for the Great War, Foch, Haig, Allenby and Robertson would not be household words in England to-day.

Others again have found limited opportunities which have served to show that they were capable of greater things than they were ever called on to perform. It has been said of Lord Wolseley that it was the tragedy of his life never to have met an opponent worthy of him. Captain Scott's fame is not lessened by his failure to be the discoverer of the South Pole; it rests on his courage, endurance and heroic acceptance of defeat.

The profit, therefore, that we may obtain from the study of a soldier's life does not depend on the magnitude of his conquests or the number of his victories. What a man could and would do is the thing which matters. It is from reading "line upon line" of a soldier's life, gathering "here a little, there a little," that we may derive the best value of either a professional or general nature. For this reason the Life of the late General Sir Charles Monro is eminently worthy of being placed on record.

Charles Carmichael Monro came of a Scotch family, of which Sir Alexander Monro of Bearcroft and afterwards of Auchinbowie was the first member of note. Alexander Monro fought for Charles II at the Battle of Worcester and after a somewhat tempestuous career, during which he became involved in various political intrigues, he entered Parliament, was knighted and died in 1704.

He left two sons, George of Auchinbowie, who became a soldier, and John who took up medicine and was the forebear of that distinguished family of physicians who, as father, son and grandson, occupied, in succession, the Chair of Anatomy at Edinburgh for an uninterrupted period of 126 years. John, after having served for some time as a surgeon with the Army of King William, settled at Edinburgh.

His son, Dr. Alexander Monro (*primus*) of Auchinbowie, was appointed professor of anatomy at the Medical School at Edinburgh at the age of twenty-two. His second son, Dr. Alexander Monro (*secundus*), succeeded his father and attained to European celebrity. He and his father were the virtual founders of the present "Edinburgh University of Medicine." After holding the Chair of Anatomy for forty years, he, in his turn, was succeeded by his son Dr. Alexander Monro (*tertius*) who also, in his turn, occupied the same position for forty years. He became President of the Royal College of Physicians and died in 1859.

Dr. Alexander Monro (*tertius*) had six sons and six daughters. The third and fourth sons, Henry and David, went to seek their fortunes in the Colonies. David went to New Zealand, made a considerable fortune, was knighted and became the first Speaker of the House of Assembly. Henry went to Australia, being one of the early settlers in that continent. He was married in the year 1846 to Catherine Power, daughter of Alexander Power, Esq., of Clonmult, County Cork, whose descent is traceable in direct line from the poet Edmund Spenser.

Unassisted by friends or interest, Henry's energy, integrity and capacity for hard work secured for him a sufficient fortune to raise in comfort and educate his large family of six sons and four daughters. But for an act of generosity he might have been a rich man. He had arranged to buy a tract of land, and the transactions for this purchase were almost completed, the title deeds alone remaining to be signed. In the meantime a friend came to him with a request for a loan of money. Henry, having satisfied himself that the friend really was, as he described it, "on the rocks," handed him the whole sum which he had set aside to pay for the land and cancelled the arrangements

for its purchase. It was on this same ground that a large part of the city of Melbourne has since been built.

Henry Monro appears to have had considerable business foresight. He was among the first of those who saw the potentialities of the Argentines. He bought a large tract of land in Argentina and the property was sold many years later to great advantage.

Henry Monro was a hardworking ascetic type of Scotsman who never spared himself. Failing in health he returned to England, and it was during the voyage that his sixth son, Charles Carmichael Monro, was born at sea on the sailing ship *Maid of Judah* on June 15, 1860.

After a short time spent in England, the family moved to Edinburgh and from there went to St. Servan in Brittany. While at St. Servan, Charles and his next elder brother, George, were taught by an English tutor, and it was here that Charles Monro learnt to speak French with a fluency which he retained for the rest of his life.

After living some years at St. Servan, Henry Monro went in search of health to Malaga, and there he died in 1869. Mrs. Monro moved with her family to Southsea. The eldest son, Alexander, went to Oxford, having obtained a scholarship at Oriel, of which college his cousin, David Binny Monro, Balliol scholar, was a fellow and late Provost and sometime Vice-Chancellor of the University.

Alexander entered the Indian Educational department and after his retirement was twice mayor of Godalming. The next two sons, David and Henry, went to work the property in the Argentines. George and Charles, who were destined for the Army, were sent to Sherborne School in 1871.

Beyond serving as a vague indication of character, the early days and school life of boys who later become distinguished are generally no more illuminating than those of ordinary beings. Infantile signs of future greatness lack the essential ingredient of prophetic utterance, in that they are never mentioned until the success has been attained which they are supposed to foretell. There was nothing in Charles Monro's boyhood to mark him as likely to outstrip any of his contemporaries in the race of life. "A 'wide' boy in Eton jacket and a smile for everyone" is the description given of him by one of his Sherborne contemporaries. He took part in all games and was particularly fond of cricket, but he did not excel in any game while at school. He was fairly good at his books and reached the sixth form.

From Sherborne, George and Charles Monro went to an Army crammer, the Rev. G. Brackenbury at Wimbledon. Charles passed into Sandhurst, the date of his admittance to the R.M.C. being September 1st, 1878. His Sandhurst report did not give much promise for the future. It described gentleman cadet Charles Monro as being "rather below the average of the cadet of his time" and remarked on his continual unpunctuality. He was also put down as being a bad rider. But he had certainly come on at cricket, for he was captain of the R.M.C. XI.

He passed out of Sandhurst, 120th on the list, on August 13th, 1879, and was appointed Second Lieutenant into the 2nd Foot, now the 1st Battalion The Queen's Royal Regiment, then stationed at Colchester. It was chance, not choice, which took him to the regiment which meant so much to him in after life. The commanding officer was a friend of the family and it was at his suggestion that Charles Monro applied for The Queen's. Monro must have pulled himself together considerably in the matter of the shortcoming mentioned in the R.M.C. report, since two years after joining his battalion he was appointed Adjutant, which post he held until July, 1886.

After serving with the regiment in Colchester and Ireland, Monro entered the Staff College in February, 1889, passing out in December, 1890. His chief distinction while at the Staff College was that of captaining the cricket XI.

Monro's mother died in 1889. She had left Southsea and resided for years previous to her death in London, where her house was the home and meeting place of all her children whenever they were in Town or passing through.

The Monro family is one in which the ties of affectionate kinship are strong, and Charles felt the death of his mother keenly. It was from her that he derived the Irish sympathy and quick sense of humour, the softer side of his nature which appeared on the surface, and was sometimes mistaken by the casual observer to represent the whole man.

After leaving the Staff College, Monro rejoined his battalion and accompanied it, in 1892, to Malta. Sir Arthur Fremantle was Governor at the time and when his aide-de-camp, Captain Ivor Maxse<sup>1</sup> resigned, Sir Arthur asked Monro to take his place. Monro would not accept the position of aide-de-camp permanently, remarking that he was "no good at carrying ladies' cloaks," but he consented to act temporarily. He also officiated for some months in 1894 as brigade major to General Knowles, commanding the infantry brigade at Malta.

<sup>1</sup> Now General Sir Ivor Maxse, K.C.B., C.V.O., D.S.O.

On one occasion, being in full dress uniform, he was coming from Valetta to Ricasoli when the boat capsized. Boats were promptly lowered from almost every man-of-war in the harbour and he was pulled out, none the worse but very angry because his brand new tunic was ruined.

From Malta the battalion moved in 1895 to India and was stationed at Ambala. Here, except for a short interval when he acted as brigade major to General Penn Symons, Monro continued in his regimental duties as a company commander.

A battalion, divided into eight small companies, as it was at that time, did not give an infantry regimental officer much scope for self-expression. Monro was chiefly remarkable as a company commander for the care that he took to secure the happiness and comfort of his men and the indifference he paid to his own comfort. He was also noted among his contemporaries for his quiet and humorous way of meeting the difficult situations which senior officers sometimes take pleasure in staging for their juniors, and the perplexing complaints occasionally advanced by the men, of which the following incidents, trivial in themselves, are illustrations as well as indications of the character which was, in later life, to mark him as a man of unusual disposition.

At a certain quarterly inspection of the company accounts the officer commanding the battalion at the time suddenly laid his hand over an entry in the pay sheet and asked, "How much did Private X deposit in the Savings Bank last month?" Monro did not know, but far from being flustered he gently lifted the colonel's hand from the page and pointed in silence to the entry which gave the information.

His strong temper, generally kept well under control, occasionally got the better of his stern sense of discipline. There was a mess rule that officers were not to bring their portfolios containing company papers into the ante-room but were to leave them in the hall. One day Monro was in the ante-room, having, in compliance with the order, left a bundle of defaulter sheets in the hall, when he saw in a looking-glass over the mantelpiece a very unpopular officer, who was much senior to himself, enter the hall and, taking the defaulter sheets, throw them behind the hat rack. Monro, noticing the officer's cap lying on the ante-room table, promptly threw it out of the window as its owner came through the doorway. His senior, naturally enraged, asked Monro what the h—ll he meant by daring to throw his cap away, and ordered him to go and pick it up at once. Monro replied that he would be happy to do so as soon as the officer had picked up his papers. The senior officer complied and the



incident was closed, but one cannot help thinking that Monro was fortunate in the dénouement.

Monro was once travelling on the Continent and found himself in a railway carriage whose only other occupant was a Frenchman. The window was open and the Frenchman, without so much as "by your leave," shut it. Monro opened it; the Frenchman again closed it; the operation was repeated once more, when Monro ended the dispute by putting his elbow through the glass, and calling the guard at the next station, asked how much he had to pay.

Captain Monro was peculiarly happy in his manner towards the subalterns. Any little weaknesses or faults of manner which they possessed were corrected by means of a constant flow of good-humoured chaff. Sometimes the correction was more drastic, as for instance when he made one of his subalterns, who was late for company orders, put on the gloves and box with him. Monro was a good boxer and a hard hitter, and as the subaltern said, "He knocked me about a lot until I happily discovered that I could move faster than he could."

Monro commanded his company of The Queen's in the Mohmand and Tirah Expeditions of 1897. He was promoted major in February, 1898, and in the following October he went to Gibraltar as brigade major, this being his first permanent staff appointment. The Governor was General Sir Robert Biddulph, and the officer commanding the garrison, which in those days was a large one and included a complete brigade of infantry, was Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Carrington of Zululand fame. A battalion of the Grenadier Guards was quartered at Gibraltar at this time and was commanded by Colonel Lloyd, afterwards General Sir Francis Lloyd, a well-known figure in London, especially during the Great War period.

Whilst at Gibraltar Major Monro occupied, together with his sister who came out to keep house for him, a little house near the Convent, which was the name by which Government House was known in those days. When in after years Monro was Governor he gave the writer the following story as a reason for the altered name. When the late King Edward VII was on his way, as Prince of Wales, to visit India, he stopped at Gibraltar, and the following morning the English newspapers announced that the Prince "having landed, had proceeded at once to the Convent." The Queen was much perturbed and immediately wired for an explanation of this somewhat unusual procedure on the Prince's part. She subsequently ordered the name to be changed. But as the dates do not tally, King Edward having

visited India many years earlier, one suspects that the story has its origin in the imagination rather than in solid fact.

The Monros, brother and sister, spent a very happy winter at Gibraltar. Monro hunted regularly with the Calpé hounds. Hospitality abounded. There were many visitors to Gibraltar, and it was here that Monro first met the Hon. Mary Towneley O'Hagan, who was destined to bring so much happiness into his life and who had come with her mother, Lady O'Hagan, to The Rock on a visit to her son, who was stationed there with his regiment, the Grenadier Guards.

Monro had only been six months at Gibraltar when he was appointed deputy assistant adjutant general at Guernsey. Major General H. M. Saward was the Lieutenant Governor of Guernsey at the time, and a great and lasting friendship was established between him and his new staff officer. Miss Monro again performed the duties of châtelaine for her brother and at their little house hospitality and happiness met together.

But in February, 1889, Monro was on the move again, this time to take up the appointment of deputy assistant adjutant general at Aldershot. He had only been at Aldershot a few months when the South African War commenced and he was appointed deputy assistant adjutant general to the 6th Division, which was mobilized as soon as the news of the losses at Modder River became known. The Commander of the 6th Division was General Sir Thomas Kelly-Kenny, an old "Queen's" officer who had been Monro's commanding officer at the time of his adjutancy. Other officers on the 6th Division staff were Captain F. Maurice,<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant A. W. Sillem,<sup>2</sup> and Lieutenant W. H. Booth.<sup>3</sup>

General Kelly-Kenny and his staff sailed for South Africa on s.s. *Dunnotton Castle*, which also conveyed Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener, with their respective staffs. On January 9th, the last day of the voyage, Monro writes :

"To-morrow our journey is over and I suppose we shall get final instructions as to our destination. Everyone is in an advanced state of excitement for news. Our company has been very distinguished, Lord Roberts with a big staff, Lord Kitchener, General Pretymann and a lot of aides-de-camp, all members of the aristocracy. Also about twenty young fellows who have given up their businesses with a view to joining some corps in South Africa. . . . After the succession of reverses one does not

<sup>1</sup> Now Major General Sir Frederick Maurice, K.C.M.G., C.B.

<sup>2</sup> Now Major General Sir Arnold Sillem, K.C.M.G., C.B. (late of The Queen's).

<sup>3</sup> Now Major W. H. Booth, D.S.O. (late of the Buffs).

know what to expect, and I rather dread the time when we shall hear the last news from the front. I wonder where the use of our schools, staff colleges, etc., come in if a body of half-civilized farmers are able to achieve so much against us. . . ."

It was during this voyage that Monro formed another friendship of his life, with Captain Lord Herbert Scott,<sup>1</sup> one of Lord Roberts' aides-de-camp, who relates the following incident of the voyage.

"Major Monro and I were playing deck cricket after luncheon one day. Major Monro smote the ball on the leg-side off my bowling right through the square porthole of General Kelly-Kenny's deck cabin. The ball, unfortunately, alighted heavily on his after-luncheon tummy. The General awoke in a fury from his siesta, put his head through the window and told us to go to h—ll. But his anger soon calmed down when he saw who were the culprits, and so far as I can remember, he joined in our game."

The 6th Division concentrated at Naw Poset and Monro was soon afield. In a letter dated January 22nd he says :

"I was put to work very soon after our arrival. We got here at 10 a.m. and at 2 p.m. I was sent off with a patrol to make a reconnaissance. I was out for four days and found it a bit hard after board-ship life. We were in the saddle all day and the sun was hot enough. My escort were a few colonial mounted infantry, splendid chaps and full of cunning—comparisons are odious so I confine myself to saying they were very good. It will give Miss Saward great pain to learn that the doctors are very apprehensive of my complexion. It received a very rude shock during my tour of patrol and I am afraid it will never recover its former beauty. . . ."

Monro was present at the actions of Poplar Grove and Driefontein and the operations which culminated at Paardeburg, and some extracts from letters containing his experiences which he wrote to his friend General Saward may be of interest. After Paardeburg he says :

"From a text book point of view the position of the Boers combined every disadvantage possible, yet it was tremendously strong. I visited their laager and found their trenches about five feet deep and most ingeniously arranged, giving them perfect cover. Our shell and howitzer fire really did them very little damage. Times have been very hard, in the first place bivouacking in the rain is not as comfortable as Gardeners Hotel<sup>2</sup> and we

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Lord Herbert Scott, C.M.G., D.S.O., late Chairman of London Chamber of Commerce, etc.

<sup>2</sup> This was the best hotel in Guernsey.

have been living on rations which have not been too sumptuous. Biscuit and the captured cattle (Boer bull is not a tender beast !) and Modder River water, flavoured by the body of an occasional dead Boer. My corporation has uncomfortably vanished. . . . I paid several visits to the firing line and the most bloodthirsty man would have been satisfied I think. We remained in the positions we had gained for the night and the next day completed the investment. We made no further movement after this except hemming the gents in closer. To-day, to our intense delight, Cronje surrendered unconditionally."

And on March 21st, after Poplar Grove :

"We were occupied all day in keeping out of the light of those confounded kopjes, but as we worked to our right, they moved to their left and at nightfall we had to get them out because they had the commanding ground and because of water. . . . We were handicapped by our R.A. being unable to move out of a walk ; their big horses had been on half rations for some time and were completely done. The infantry were splendid ; they really went at the Boers with grand dash. They (the Boers) tried the white flag trick and suffered for it. The Buffs bayoneted those who did it up to the hilt. Our troubles were increased at night time trying to get the wounded in. We were fighting till dark, there was no moon and bitterly cold and the difficulty in finding the poor chaps amongst the kopjes was very great. I am afraid there was a lot of suffering among them, but the doctors worked grandly. In fact all through this war you hear nothing but praise of their work. . . ."

After the capture of Pretoria the 6th Division was employed south of the Orange River.

General Kelly-Kenny accompanied Lord Roberts when he returned to England and Monro came with them. He received a brevet lieutenant colonelcy for his services during the war.

A few months later, in February, 1901, Lieutenant Colonel Monro was appointed Chief Instructor of the School of Musketry at Hythe.

Monro had now completed twenty-one years' service. He had been adjutant of his regiment, he had passed the Staff College, he had held staff appointments in peace and war and he had served in two wars. As a company commander he was conspicuous for the attention he gave to the comfort and well-being of his men, for his sometimes original way of dealing with unexpected or difficult situations, for his cheeriness, keen sense of humour and faculty for bestowing appropriate nicknames on one and all. He was the life of every mess or social gathering

into which he entered, and it was impossible for anyone to be dull or down-hearted in his society. He played a good game of cricket and rackets and was fond of hunting. He was generous in his hospitality. He did not seek opportunities or attempt to create them, partly perhaps because he was diffident as to his capabilities and unaware of the existence of his dormant powers. To the majority of his comrades he was just a sound, sensible infantry officer, devoted to his regiment, loyal to his chiefs, thorough in his work, the best of good fellows, whose hall-mark was little above mediocrity.

There were a few only who put a higher valuation on him ; General Kelly-Kenny who had seen his work as an adjutant and as a staff officer in the field, General Saward and one or two others of his friends. Even they did not suspect the presence in that unassuming personality, of the qualities of leadership, judgment and fearlessness of responsibility which only arose to the surface when, in course of time, circumstances stimulated them into action.

## CHAPTER II

A soldier's contribution to Victory not always made on the battle-field. The contribution made by Monro at Hythe. Evidences of the Great War. Monro the founder of modern infantry fire tactics. The results of inadequate machine-gun armament. Musketry training prior to South African War. Opposition to Monro's innovations. Monro's work as chief instructor. Fire is everything and tactics change every ten years. Monro's work as Commandant. The Monro doctrine. Hythe the commencement of Monro's career. Is appointed to command a brigade. Is appointed to command a Territorial division. Marriage.

**A** SOLDIER wins renown on the battle-field, but his most valuable contribution to victory is often made in the office or on the training ground.

It was Lord Fisher at the Admiralty, fighting against manifold obstructions and the opposition of some of the most influential men of his own service, who did more than anyone else to retain for us the mastery at sea, without which neither we nor our allies could have ever gained the mastery on land.

It was Lord Wolseley at the War Office, fighting against every sort of professional, society, and reactionary interest, who set up a standard of efficiency in our officer ranks which won unwilling admiration from our opponents in the early days of the Great War, and which even before the War, was considered by instructed German opinion as the equal of their own (see Kuhl's *Commentary on the War*).

It might almost be said that the War of 1870 was won by the Germans not so much on French soil as in the office rooms of Von Moltke and Von Roon in Berlin. Sir John Moore's claim to a place in history may be found in the training camps at Shorncliffe as certainly as in the Campaign of Corunna. Lord Kitchener's reputation is attributable to his work while in Cairo and at the War Office rather than to his presence in the field of operations.

It was Charles Monro, in the lecture rooms and on the ranges at Hythe, who, shaking free from the antiquated methods of past generations, was foremost in introducing a system of fire tactics combined with skill in the use of the army rifle which was later the salvation of our troops, when fighting against an overwhelming superiority of numbers during the early battles of the Great War.

The evidence of this is abundant and comes from both sides, e.g. "The regiment was shot down, smashed up—only a handful left. Our first battle is a heavy, unheard-of heavy defeat, and against the English, the English we laughed at." (From a German regimental officer's account of the Battle of Mons.) "Once more the British troops had shown a superiority over the enemy in fortitude and endurance, through all the varying phases of a battle, and once more their fire discipline had, in his eyes, multiplied the small force opposing him into immense superiority of numbers." (*Official History, Military Operations, France and Belgium, 1914, Vol. II.*)

So devastating was the rifle fire delivered by our troops that the Germans attributed it to machine-guns. They did not believe that a volume of fire of such rapidity and steadiness could come from rifles in the hands of individual men.<sup>1</sup>

It is not suggested that the whole merit for the successes referred to belongs to the excellency of our rifle training, and Charles Monro would have been the last man in the Army to uphold such a view. The finest skill in the world would have availed little without the "fortitude and endurance" and, one may add, the imperturbability of the men who delivered the fire. But these national characteristics were immensely fortified by the confidence which the soldiers had in their weapons and in their ability to make the best use of them. Every practical soldier is conscious of the value of this kind of confidence; it gives to the man in the ranks the same reliance that trust in his troops gives to a commander.

It would not be right to give the credit for the high standard of musketry training in our Army at the commencement of the Great War to Charles Monro alone. He was Chief Instructor at the School of Musketry, and afterwards, as Commandant, was the first of a succession of commandants and instructors who brought enthusiasm, combined with energy and clear thinking, to the work of reconstruction and of preaching the new doctrine

<sup>1</sup> "The Germans imagined that they were everywhere opposed by machine-guns only, not realizing the intensity of British rapid fire. (*Military Operations, France and Belgium, 1914. Vol. I.*)

"The Musketry of the Expeditionary Force was such that its bursts of rapid fire were repeatedly mistaken for machine-gun or automatic rifle fire. In the German account . . . the British are credited with quantities of machine-guns so that 'over every bush, hedge and fragment of wall floated a thin film of smoke betraying a machine-gun rattling out bullets,' and 'the roads were swept by machine-gun fire.' Yet in 1914 each battalion and cavalry regiment had only two such weapons on taking the field, and many of these had been damaged or destroyed and were only gradually replaced." (*Military Operations in France and Belgium, 1914. Vol. II.*)

to the Army at large. The Army owed much to the work of the men who followed in Monro's footsteps, viz. Colonel G. G. A. Egerton,<sup>1</sup> W. N. Congreve<sup>2</sup> and H. G. Ruggles-Brise,<sup>3</sup> with whom must be associated Major E. G. May,<sup>4</sup> who as Assistant Director of Army Training at the War Office, and himself an ardent advocate of musketry reform, gave valuable support from the War Office side to the reformers at Hythe. Monro, too, could have done little as Chief Instructor without the concurrence and encouragement which he never failed to get from his Commandant, Colonel Pennington.<sup>5</sup>

There is also the curious fact that the training of our men and their exceptional skill in rapid rifle fire was partly the result of battalions being under-armed as regards machine-guns. It is well established that our Army in France during the first months of the Great War was seriously handicapped on account of inadequate armaments, and shortage of munitions. This was not the fault of the military authorities.

In the official history of the War it is written, "The rapid fire of the British Infantry was introduced as a substitute for additional machine-guns, which were refused to it. In 1909 the School of Musketry urged that each battalion should have six guns instead of two; the suggestion was declined for financial reasons and subsequent reductions of the Army Estimates made any such additions impossible. It was, therefore, decided to increase the rate of fire of each rifle by the special training of the men."<sup>6</sup>

The development of fire tactics during the era preceding the South African War had not kept pace with the development of fire weapons. The musketry training of the soldier up to the 'nineties was antiquated and profoundly boring. It consisted of firing a limited number of rounds at a stationary bull's-eye target, at fixed known ranges, progressing from 100 yards to 1,000 yards, the distances gradually increasing, instead of decreasing as they normally do in war. It taught men how to handle their rifles, press the trigger and shoot straight, but this is only the A B C of fire tactics, and beyond this groundwork instruction did not go.

The object of every individual was to obtain the highest number of points, to achieve which, various devices were resorted

<sup>1</sup> Now Major General G. G. A. Egerton, C.B.

<sup>2</sup> The late Sir Walter Congreve, V.C., K.C.B., K.C.M.G.

<sup>3</sup> The late Sir H. Ruggles-Brise, K.C.M.G., C.B.

<sup>4</sup> Now Major General Sir E. G. May, K.C.B., C.M.G.

<sup>5</sup> Now Major General R. Pennington.

<sup>6</sup> *Military Operations in France and Belgium*, 1914. Vol. II, page 220.



to, such as the use of telescopes, wind gauges, quaint firing positions, the firer might be as deliberate as he pleased, markers signalled the position of each shot. Classification at known ranges satisfied the majority.

Periodically, about once a year, there was "field firing," when a battalion or a brigade would spend a glorious morning blazing away at a number of screens set up in conspicuous positions which no sane enemy would ever think of occupying, and with little or no attention given to the methods of approach, formations or covering fire. Everything was as unlike war as it could possibly be. Little was taught at the School of Musketry beyond the firing exercises, the musketry regulations and some ballistic theories concerning the flight of bullets.

Continental countries—France, Italy and Belgium—were far ahead of us in the actual standard of army shooting, in range construction, in experimental firing, in general instructions. Their musketry regulations were more complete and more up-to-date. The School of Musketry at Hythe was in a backward state. It had no experimental staff, no attention was given to foreign methods, arms and regulations; no standard plans existed for range construction, which branch was left in the hands of the Royal Engineers, to build whatever they fancied. The administrative staff was undermanned.

It seems strange that so little thought and attention should have been given to this subject, when one considers its supreme importance. Over 130 years before (in 1768), Frederick the Great had written in his *Military Testament*, "Battles are won by fire superiority," the truth of which was exemplified throughout the following generations at Austerlitz and Waterloo, Gravelotte and Plevna, up to the war in South Africa.

Notwithstanding our deplorable backwardness in musketry, any changes in the existing system were opposed, as generally happens in such cases, by certain influential persons who did not believe that any system could be better than the one in which they themselves had been trained. There were many others who realized the urgent desirability of a change, but who hesitated to take on a task which bristled with difficulties or who were not in a position to gain a hearing or have any say in the matter. In order to bring about a reform there must be enthusiasm, as well as energy and clear thinking; there must also be imagination and foresight, without which reform will be neither lasting nor profitable. These essential qualities were combined in the person of Charles Monro, and the regeneration of the musketry system as well as the inception of our present ideas

on infantry fire tactics dates from the time of his appointment as Chief Instructor at Hythe.

It is not evident why Monro, a company commander in The Queen's, was selected for this appointment. He had not, up till that time, shown any particular interest in musketry. It may have been because he commanded the best shooting company in a regiment which had the reputation of being more advanced in its training methods than the majority of the infantry units of the Army. It is said that on arriving with his company on the range he would hold out his handkerchief, and if it showed that there was the slightest breeze would march the company back to barracks and wait till the breeze had dropped. This may be evidence of the trouble he was prepared to take in order to produce a good company record, but it was as little conformable to war conditions as the other contrivances, not to say subterfuges, which were adopted in order to secure a high figure of merit for one's own company or one's own battalion. It certainly did not show any sign of departure from the old system which, later, it fell to his lot to eradicate.

Writing to General Saward from the Army and Navy Club he says: "The authorities have appointed me Chief Instructor at Hythe. I could not well decline the appointment as it carries the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, but am very conscious of my incapacity for such a job."

Major Monro joined at Hythe in February, 1901. When reporting his arrival to the Commandant, Colonel Pennington, he said that he had come somewhat reluctantly, as musketry was a subject which he had never seriously taken up, and he feared that his want of experience might cause him to be a hindrance rather than a help. This did not worry Colonel Pennington; he had already heard from General Sir T. Kelly-Kenny that Charles Monro would never take credit for being able to render useful service in any capacity or undertaking. It was not long before Colonel Pennington found that in Major Monro he had not only a very capable staff officer and a delightful companion, but also about the most suitable man to fill the post of Chief Instructor which the Army could provide.

From the first, Commandant and Chief Instructor were in full agreement as to the need for washing out the past and starting the scheme of reconstruction on a clean slate. Before making any changes, however, they went abroad and made themselves acquainted with the musketry systems of some of the Continental countries.

Colonel Pennington's predecessor had advised the War Office

to abolish the staff officer of the School and combine his duties with those of the Chief Instructor. This economical arrangement worked all right as long as the School was run on the old lines, but it threw a heavy extra burden of work on those who had imposed on themselves the task of renovation. The Commandant sat on two War Office Committees weekly and was constantly absent on inspection duty, and much of the actual business and routine of the school was necessarily left in the hands of the Chief Instructor.

Major General Pennington writes : " When I think it all over at this distance of time, I only wonder that he (Monro) ever got through with it all. Nothing ever went up to the War Office without his full knowledge and comment, for it was necessary that he should at any time represent the Commandant and act in his absence. I wrote no page of the new musketry regulations which he did not review, and his criticism and suggestions on that and all other matters were always invaluable. If we disagreed on any point he put his views clearly and forcibly, and if, as happened once in a way, I held to my view, he never failed to accept it loyally and make it his own. . . . His Staff College training, staff experience and general first-rate knowledge of his profession qualified him especially for the varied work he had to undertake. His tact, geniality and unfailing good temper contributed greatly to the smooth introduction of the many changes which were being effected. The credit for the complete revision of the courses of training was his almost entirely. . . . I consider that he raised the standard of instruction and increased the value and interest of the courses at least a hundred per cent. . . ."

Napoleon said : " Fire is everything, the rest is of small account." He also said : " Tactics change every ten years." Taken apart, these two apothegms are no more than statements of facts. Taken together they suggest the thought that fire tactics cannot be allowed to remain stationary without inviting defeat. They must be constantly revised and made to conform with the ever-increasing effect which firearms derive from the introduction of mechanization and further developments in the weapons themselves.

It was Monro's peculiar merit that, directly circumstances turned his attention to the subject of musketry, he devoted all his thoughts and energies to the purpose of bringing the fire, which is everything, and which had lagged far behind, to the level of the tactics which change every few years. The Boers in South Africa had recently taught us, in many a painful lesson,



CHARLES MONRO  
*Aged 7.*



the value of mobility combined with fire. Monro carried the lesson further and taught that the fire and mobility must be simultaneous as well as combined; that the advance of the infantry must be assisted by *its own* fire as well as by the fire of the artillery, which must continue to shoot right up to the moment of assault. He it was who laid the foundations of the modern minor tactics which are crystallized in the expression "Fire and movement."

The results were far-reaching and were not confined to fire tactics alone. The new system did much to develop among the junior ranks the attributes of initiative, resource, quickness to seize the fleeting opportunity. It gave to the "other ranks" an interest in training which had been absent from the former methods of linear tactics and volley firing by word of command. It remedied the defects which are contained in Lord Roberts' strictures after the South African War, when he said: "Our soldiers have no initiative; they are not clever at making use of the ground, and although good target shots, are not trained to battle shooting."

The opposition which Monro's reforms received from the reactionaries has been mentioned. The most influential opponent was the National Rifle Association, which put obstructions in the way of every advance towards war conditions, such as the introduction of smaller targets, the abolition of the bull's-eye except in the elementary stages of a soldier's training, the employment of rapid fire, shooting at disappearing or moving targets. It wanted match shooting, not battle shooting.

Had it not been for Lord Roberts' strong support and the personal interest he took in the School of Musketry, which helpful attitude was maintained later by the Army Council, it is improbable that Monro could have carried through his reforms. This opposition lasted throughout the whole of his time at Hythe. It happened, fortunately, that the National Rifle Association was dependent on the War Office for the supply of tents, markers for the Bisley Meeting and other things, and the Army Council made it clear that in paying the piper it meant to call the tune.

In 1903 Monro was selected to succeed Pennington as Commandant and received promotion to the rank of substantive Colonel by virtue of the appointment. When Lord Roberts was Commander-in-Chief it was his custom to see the Commandant personally at the War Office and often wrote privately to him with instructions and for information. On the occasion of informing Pennington that Monro was to be his successor he

added, "Tell him when he writes to me, to type it; I can't puzzle through his queer handwriting." It certainly was unlike anyone else's and has been described as being "the most preposterously impossible old English script."

It has been written of Monro's time of service at Hythe by one who knew him well, "I should judge that no better or more contented staff ever existed than at Hythe under his guidance and inspiration. I can recall no friction or disagreeable incident of any kind, and have only the memory of admirable discipline and order and the most cheerful and harmonious soldiering I have ever known. Monro stood out as a stirring example of loyalty, reliability, common sense and simplicity. He knew nothing of ostentation, pantomime or cheap diplomacy and was always direct. If 'No' had to be said, it was said at once and decidedly, and no offence was ever taken owing to his genial personality and the knowledge that he knew what he was talking about."<sup>1</sup>

Although Monro was a rigid disciplinarian, he was always "human" and ready to go beyond the letter of the law when no possible harm could come to the service or the individual by doing so. As an example of this, a former pupil of his at the Musketry School writes, "I well remember his making it possible for me to attend Ascot races in the middle of the course, which was a great concession on the part of the authorities. How the ramp was arranged I cannot remember, probably on the plea of dentistry, but I, anyway, took a 'special' at the end of the course, and so we can both be exonerated from all blame."

The vacancy caused by Colonel Monro's advancement was filled, mainly on his recommendation, by Major W. D. Bird,<sup>2</sup> also of The Queen's. Colonel G. Egerton, who succeeded Monro as Commandant, selected a young officer from his regiment, The Green Howards, for the post of Assistant Instructor, and Colonel Walter Congreve, who followed Egerton, likewise chose an officer from his regiment, the Rifle Brigade, for the same post. Many years afterwards, Egerton was walking with Monro through Eaton Square and, recalling old times, chaffingly remarked that when Congreve had succeeded him he had kept up the traditions of the School as regards nepotism. Monro said, "Yes, that reminds me of the story of the two generals who were talking together and one said sententiously, 'My view, my dear X, is that, *cæteris paribus*, the man one knows best is the man for

<sup>1</sup> Letter of Major General Pennington to the Author.

<sup>2</sup> Now Major General Sir Wilkinson Bird, K.B.E., C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.

the job.' His friend replied, 'I entirely agree, Y, I entirely agree, but *cæteris paribus* be damned!'

A press appreciation of Sir Charles Monro, which appeared after his death, says: "Officers and soldiers of the old school will always gratefully remember him as the courageous pioneer who brought the musketry of the British Army to the state of efficiency which made it second to that of no army in the world, in August, 1914. Only those who were at Hythe School of Musketry before the War can appreciate the magnitude of the difficulties which Colonel Monro had to overcome. He was Chief Instructor at a very critical time, when we were applying the lessons learned at great cost in the Boer War, and afterwards he became Commandant and put our musketry on a really progressive and efficient basis. Those who worked with Sir Charles Monro in those trying days are even to-day full of enthusiasm for his far-sighted methods and the unbending courage with which he applied them. In fact, he was a soldier of courage, resource and brains, who never received one half of the credit due to him."

Charles Monro's "career" may be said to date from the day he went to Hythe. Hitherto he had shown himself to be a good regimental and junior staff officer, and nothing more. He had exhibited no qualities which were likely to raise him above his fellows. His friends and those who served with him would know that he possessed the facile virtues of kindness, generosity, sympathy and humour, but they would have seen little indication of those faculties which alone will enable a soldier to solve the difficult problems and fight his way successfully through the perplexities which are the inevitable accompaniments of the higher command. But directly he joined the School of Musketry Monro observed the opportunity, and it soon became evident that he was gifted with the imagination to see farther than ordinary men; with the courage to voice his opinions and the tenacity to adhere to them; with the clear mind to translate his imaginings into a definite plan; with the energy and determination to make his plan a concrete fact, despite all difficulties and oppositions.

When he arrived at Hythe the musketry training of the Army was obsolete and inferior to that of the leading Continental nations. By the time he left, training in musketry and fire tactics concurred with the conditions of the modern battle-field.

By the year 1911 the Monro doctrine, as it was called, had been accepted throughout the Army as the basis of training in battle shooting, and in the same year General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, commanding at Aldershot, gave directions in his



"Instructions for Collective Training" that the Monro methods were to be practised during the company training. The divisional commanders, Generals Lomax and Lawson, who from the first had shown a keen interest in the subject, did all that was possible to spread the doctrine, which during the summer of 1911 became the principal topic of discussion in military circles.

Monro's successors, Egerton, Congreve and Ruggles-Brise, completed his designs, with the result that in the summer of 1914 the British Army showed an unquestionable superiority in battle shooting over all the other armies which took the field at the commencement of the Great War. In order to visualize in proper perspective the immense importance of this fact, one has only to recall to mind the indomitable resistance against overwhelming numbers made by the British Infantry at Mons, Le Cateau and the First Battle of Ypres, and by the British Cavalry on the Wyschaete-Messines Line, when troops of inferior marksmanship and rifle training would have suffered irretrievable defeat, no matter what other fighting values they possessed.<sup>1</sup>

It has been said at the beginning of this chapter that a soldier's chief contribution to victory is often made on the training ground. Monro commanded the 2nd Division at Mons and Ypres and during the intervening operations, and in this capacity his rôle on the battle-field was a prominent one. But the results of his six years' work at Hythe were of greater value to the British arms, farther reaching and more influential in consequences than his personal share, important as it was, in the desperate contests of those direful days.

Monro's worth, which first became known through his work at the School of Musketry, was fully recognized at the War Office and especially by Sir Douglas Haig, who at that time was Director of Staff Duties. He left Hythe in March, 1907, and was appointed the same month to the command of the 13th Infantry Brigade at Dublin.

When Monro, now a Brigadier General, took over his new command, Lord Grenfell was Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, shortly afterwards to be succeeded by General Sir Neville Lyttleton. Sir Neville and Lady Lyttleton were soon to be numbered among his best friends and Brigadier General Monro and his sister, Miss Monro, who kept house for him, were frequent guests at the Royal Hospital.

<sup>1</sup> The Germans had a numerical superiority of nearly two to one in their favour on the Ypres front as a whole and far more favourable odds in particular sectors. . . . But it was the enemy's tremendous superiority in heavy artillery that oppressed the French and British. . . ." (*Military Operations, France and Belgium, 1914. Vol. II.*)

Lieutenant General Sir H. Plumer<sup>1</sup> was in command at the Curragh in those days, and the Monros, who had many friends at the Curragh, were often the recipients of Sir Herbert and Lady Plumer's hospitality.

It was not long before Monro made his mark as a brigade commander. The 13th Brigade soon became famous for its skill in fire tactics, and his conduct of field exercises and field firing was stimulating and progressive; his criticisms were opportune and incisive and of a kind to stay in the memories of his hearers; he was always listened to with respect and attention. The judgment and professional knowledge which he showed at the staff tours and manœuvres conducted by General Plumer and afterwards by General Pitcairn Campbell,<sup>2</sup> were observed by everyone, and the manner in which he handled his brigade, and his physical activity at the manœuvres held in Carlow in 1910 by Sir Neville Lyttleton, was highly commended.

His appointment carried with it other duties, outside his brigade. He was a member of several committees, and he took a keen interest in the Royal Hibernian Military School and in the Drummond Institution.

The assistant chaplain of these two institutions, the Rev. J. Murray, who was present at the committee meetings at which Monro took the Chair, writes of him: "If a member of a committee wanted to raise an objection to a resolution he would not seem to himself to have even begun to state it when Monro would say: 'Suppose we alter it in this way,' exactly expressing the point at issue."

His kindness to the officials of these institutions was unvarying. No one ever heard him grumble; no one ever heard him complain. Of course he might mention that so-and-so was a donkey, but he would add, if he possibly could, that he was in other respects rather a decent man.

During his subaltern days Monro had been quartered at the Royal Barracks in Dublin and also in Tralee, and he was thoroughly at home in Ireland. He and his sister had a large circle of friends, among them being Lord O'Brien, the Lord Chancellor, Judge Madden, Sir John Ross and the Recorder, Sir Frederick Falkener, whose daughter married Charles Monro's elder brother, Major George Monro of Auchinbowie.

The Monros were extremely hospitable, and at their house, where geniality was the prevailing note, Dublin Society was used to meet in numbers.

<sup>1</sup> Now Field Marshal Viscount Plumer, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O., G.B.E.

<sup>2</sup> Now Lieutenant General Sir William Pitcairn Campbell, K.C.B.

Monro took the keenest pleasure in hunting and went out regularly with the Ward and Meath hounds. He was a bold, rather than a good, rider. But in spite of his weight and not a few falls, he generally managed to be well up in the longest run. When a friend remarked to him that he showed great courage in taking up serious hunting with such a high-class pack as the Meath he replied: "My dear fellow, it's a quite admirable nerve-tonic."

On one occasion when he was out with the Ward hounds he came to a brook running deep under high banks, which was unjumpable where he struck it. Most people would have searched up and down for a negotiable spot, but it happened that near Monro was a very narrow bridge with no side rails and not more than three feet wide. He rammed his horse at the bridge and got across in spite of his horse nearly slipping upon the wet and greasy surface of the planks. The determination to get forward was typical of the man.

General Sir Neville Lyttleton and Field Marshal Lord Plumer have both testified to the high standard of Monro's work as a brigade commander, and his success in this capacity brought him promotion to Major General in 1911 and the command of the 2nd London Territorial Division in the spring of 1912. The command of the 13th Brigade was taken over by Brigadier General T. Capper.<sup>1</sup> He spent most of the winter, between leaving Dublin and taking up his new command, in hunting in the Midlands with his great friend, Hubert Hamilton.<sup>2</sup>

The Monros, brother and sister, had taken a house in Eccleston Square during the summer of 1912 and up to the time of Monro's marriage. Here it was that they renewed the friendship with Lady O'Hagan and her daughter which had begun at Gibraltar in 1898-99. The friendship developed into a closer alliance, and on October 1st, 1912, Major General Charles Monro was married in Westminster Abbey to the Hon. Mary Towneley O'Hagan, daughter of the late first Baron, Lord O'Hagan, Lord Chancellor of Ireland.

One forbears to intrude into the secret chamber of this perfect alliance. Only once or twice does Charles Monro himself lift the veil for a moment, as when he writes to a much-loved relative during the War. "Fourteen months are now over and each succeeding month makes me long all the more eagerly to be back with her again and share the most sacred life that was ever given

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Major General Sir Thomas Capper, K.C.B., D.S.O. Killed at Ypres, 1914.

<sup>2</sup> Major General Sir Hubert Hamilton, K.C.B., D.S.O. Killed in action, 1914.

to living man." What had gone before had been a time of promise and a dream ; when at last the revelation of this great love came to him it was something holy, a sanctity, a silence which filled the hidden springs of his soul with a gladness too deep for utterance. The union of Charles and Mary Monro is best expressed in the words of our great poet :

" He is the half part of a blessed man  
Left to be finished by such as she ;  
And she, a fair divided excellence  
Whose fullness of perfection lies in him."

The honeymoon was spent on the Continent. Soon after the return to England General Monro writes to his sister-in-law : " Old Alex (his elder brother) came to see us yesterday. He presented himself for election to the Municipal Council the other day and was beaten by his postman, whom he had tipped just before. ' No more cadeaux for my successful rival,' he exclaimed."

## CHAPTER III

Monro appointed to command 2nd Division, August, 1914. His feelings regarding the War. His opinion of politicians who declared war was unthinkable. Senseless condemnation of war by certain writers. Monro's qualities as divisional commander. A French appreciation. Havoc at Hooze Château. A midnight scene, October, 1914. Recommends leave for all ranks. Hazebrouck. Succeeds Haig in command of 1st Corps. Hinges, Béthune, and Choques. K.C.B. Incident concerning Prince of Wales. Opinions. Incident at Béthune. Command of Third Army. Beauquesne. Pétain. Regimental Bands. Official correspondence. Appointed to command at Gallipoli *vice* Ian Hamilton.

MONRO commanded the 13th Infantry Brigade for five years and the 2nd London Territorial Division for two years, and throughout that period his reputation steadily increased. He accurately gauged the limitations of the Territorial Force and set his division a standard which was not beyond its powers to attain, and he was satisfied with nothing short of that standard.

On his morning rides through the camps during the training season he surprised everyone by his knowledge of every detail connected with the organisation and interior economy of the division. The questions he asked were something more than requests for information; they were in themselves informative, or contained a tactful reproof to a zealous but unmilitary-minded citizen officer. He possessed a peculiar gift of making it felt that he had spoken to each individual officer, non-commissioned officer and man in his division. His genial and sympathetic personality, his obvious professional ability won the affection as well as the respect of all ranks. Consequently when in August, 1914, he was directed to take over the command of the 2nd Division at Aldershot, *vice* Sir Archibald Murray,<sup>1</sup> the only person who was surprised was himself.

It was a rare mark of confidence to be selected, after the declaration of war, to command one of the four divisions of "The Old Contemptible" Army which were first despatched to the seat of war, and it is a proof of the high estimation in which

<sup>1</sup> Appointed Chief of General Staff to Sir John French. Now General Sir A. J. Murray, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., C.V.O., D.S.O.

he was held by the higher authorities. In 1901 he was an unknown major in an infantry regiment ; in 1914 he was a major general commanding a war division. It was rapid advancement for peace time. He had emerged from professional obscurity and his name became known for the first time to the general public.

It is not proposed to enter here into a description of the operations in which the division, corps and armies that General Monro commanded successively were engaged. Their respective rôles in the great retreat from Mons, in attack and counter-attack on the Aisne, in the desperate fighting at Ypres, and in the subsequent trench warfare are fully described in the official and other accounts of the War. Their deeds are written in history, and with them the name of Charles Monro will be associated as long as their memory lasts.<sup>1</sup> It is the personal aspect with which we are concerned, and to that, as far as possible, attention will be confined.

Contrary to the opinion held by some people that because a man wears uniform and belongs to the profession of arms he must necessarily desire to go and kill the men of some other nation, or be killed by them, Monro had no ardent longing for war ; nor did he rejoice in it when it came, as appears in the following extracts from his correspondence, the first dated August 12th, 1914 :

"As for myself, it is hard in these circumstances to dismiss the personal aspect. I had a feeling which became accentuated in times of dejection that something must happen ; the absolute bliss of my life with Mary seemed to me too perfect to endure."

And two days later :

"Am off early to-morrow morning for the 'Continong,' hardly a holiday trip this time. I am absolutely certain that our cause is just and that when we meet the Germans we shall lick them, even with the numerical odds heavily against us. I went up to London to say good-bye to them all and came back early this morning. So here is to our next merry meeting. I wonder if I shall ever cut thistles at Auchinbowie again. I cannot grumble. I have had two years of happiness such as has never been given to mortal man."

<sup>1</sup> Extract from letter written by Sir Douglas Haig to General Monro, dated Headquarters, First Army Corps, October 24th, 1914 : "... All units in your command have marched and fought well. I am very proud to command such splendid *fighting* men ; at the same time many arrangements have to be made in order to bring the troops in good condition to the decisive point. You and your staff have been most successful in this, and I am deeply sensible of their work and very grateful for all you and they have done to ensure the success of your operations. Please accept my best congratulations and every good wish for the future."

The third extract is from a letter written in May, 1915 :

" Nine months of this bitter separation is now over ; a good slice, thank goodness, but who can tell how much more of it we are going to have. My goodness, I do long for it to finish . . . and there must be many who share my feelings. Who would have thought this time last year that this pandemonium would have occurred. I have to put up with this separation as best I can ; the only thing I look to now is to clear out of the Army directly this show is over and try to live uninterruptedly at home, with no manœuvres and staff rides to interfere with my life with Mary. There is also a big ' When ' to be overcome yet. . . . Egerton wrote me a letter the other day in which he said : ' What a beautiful old place Auchinbowie is ! ' Tempe's<sup>1</sup> words which she wrote me, often ring in my ears, viz. that she expected me to tackle the thistles this June and July, and they put me in good heart for a long time, but now there is no prospect of this being possible."

Monro went to the War with a full realization of the seriousness, the immensity of the task before him. Like every instructed soldier, from Lord Roberts downwards, he had foreseen that war with Germany was inevitable ; he was aware of our unpreparedness ;<sup>2</sup> he deplored the folly of those politicians who refused to see the writing on the wall ; who loudly proclaimed the " unthinkable-ness " of war and the wickedness of Lord Roberts and the soldiers who actually found that it was " thinkable " ; of those politicians who in condemning the men who tried to warn the country of the coming storm unwittingly condemned their own short-sightedness. He was contemptuous of the writers who denunciate mankind for its criminal stupidity in plunging into a world war, and who are unconscious of the universal law that every cause has its effect and that every cause is itself the effect of some antecedent cause. It would be equally sensible to accuse the Almighty of stupidity on account of the

<sup>1</sup> His sister-in-law, Mrs. George Monro.

<sup>2</sup> This remark does not apply to the Navy or to the Regular Army. The Navy was fully prepared technically and as far as ships and personnel were concerned ; the Expeditionary Force was probably better trained than any other troops of any army which took part in the War ; the Territorial Force provided the means for certain expansion of the Army ; the arrangements for the transportation of the Expeditionary Force were complete. But there was a lamentable deficiency in armaments and munitions, and plans for the industrial mobilization of the nation to cope with a war of the first magnitude did not exist. The result was loss of time, waste of man power and expenditure—evils which in their addition amounted to a sum not short of disastrous. On page x of the Preface to Vol. II of *Military Operations, France and Belgium, 1915* (official account) there will be found remarks of Field Marshal Earl Haig on the proofs of the Festubert Chapters, in which he says, " and I hope that the British people will realize what unpreparedness for war cost the Empire in flesh and blood in the years with which you are dealing."

famines, plagues and other large scale afflictions of the human race, which cause as much suffering as war and take a greater toll of life.<sup>1</sup>

There are others who write that the younger generations will not easily forgive the selfish incompetence of the generation which has left them the legacy of debts and other material burdens which have resulted from the War. They omit the other side of the account, the example of heroic self-sacrifice on the part of the men and women of our race which, if not neglected by those who would blame us, should by its inspiration gain more for the Empire than was ever lost by the War. War is not all evil, nor is it all noble. It has its ignoble acts, its desolating effects; it has its glorious acts, its inspiring effects. It is only through opposition and contradictions of circumstances, through hardships and sorrow that mankind grows to full stature; sustained by the faith that, in accordance with the Eternal scheme, the Good predominates over the Bad, leading humanity slowly but surely across the drear spaces of adversity nearer to the image of the Creator.

Monro was fifty-four years old when he went to the War. He had always kept himself fit, and his sturdy frame was well calculated to withstand the inevitable fatigues of mobile warfare. Throughout those early days of storm and stress, the trials of the retreat from Mons, the battles of the Marne and Aisne, the encounter battles gradually stabilizing into trench warfare, Monro commanded his division with decision and judgment. He made no mistakes. He was never hurried, never flustered, never surprised.

We have the following impression of him from the pen of a French officer: "Le général Monro est un chef admirable. Il est en ce moment (5 Février, '16) en France à la tête de la première armée britannique. Il a été un des bons ouvriers de la bataille de la Marne. Il s'est illustré par la prise du chemin des Dames, point stratégique de décisive importance à l'est du plateau de Craonne. Le grand chef savait vivre comme le plus simple troupier. Je l'ai vu roulé dans son manteau, se coucher sur une route et dormir là, se contentant sans peine de trois ou quatre heures de sommeil par nuit pendant des semaines."

Monro's career was nearly ended on October 31st, 1914. On that day at 12.45 p.m. he had met General Lomax, who commanded the 1st Division at Hooze Château on the Menin Road,

<sup>1</sup> There were twelve million deaths from influenza alone in India during the year 1918-19, which is more than double the number of men of all belligerent countries who were killed during the four years of the Great War.



in order to consider the measures to be taken to meet the serious situation which had arisen on account of a break in the 1st Division line. A number of staff officers belonging to the two divisions were also present and the whole party was assembled in a small room, the French windows of which opened into the garden. Suddenly a 5.9 inch shell fell within a few yards of the window, and most of those who were in the room turned and went towards the window to see where the shell had fallen, whilst Monro, prompted by chance, fate or Providence, drew his chief staff officer, Colonel R. Whigham,<sup>1</sup> into the inner doorway for the purpose of consulting with him whether they should return to their own headquarters or move to some spot further forward. At that very moment a second shell burst right in the window. General Lomax was dangerously wounded and died later. Colonel F. W. Kerr, Lieutenant Colonel A. J. Perceval, Major G. Paley, Captain R. Ommaney and Captain F. M. Chenevix Trench were killed on the spot. Lieutenant H. M. Robertson and Major I. W. Forsett were wounded. A third shell following quickly after the second, struck a corner of the house, killing no one, but filling the rooms with dust and falling plaster. Most accounts state that General Monro was rendered unconscious by the explosion of the second shell. This is not the case; he walked to the window directly after the catastrophe had occurred, passing over the bodies of some of the officers who had been killed. He was very much shaken by the concussion and by the terrible havoc which the shell had created.<sup>2</sup> Shortly afterwards he went forward to Sir Douglas Haig's Headquarters, and here, after a rest and some brandy from General Haig's own flask, he soon recovered, suffering nothing worse than a bad headache.

Captain "Jack" Collins<sup>3</sup> of the 1st Corps Staff relates that on the evening of that day (October 31st) he was sent by Brigadier General "Johnnie" Gough to see General Monro in connection with the arrangements for a counter-attack to be made by the French in order to relieve the pressure on the 2nd Division. He found the General about midnight in his headquarters, which he had moved forward from Hooge to an isolated farm two miles nearer to the enemy. The scene in the farm impressed itself on Collins' memory; General Monro himself and a French Général de Division of the pre-1914, old and crusted

<sup>1</sup> Now General Sir Robert Whigham, G.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O.

<sup>2</sup> Two of the officers killed were on the Headquarters staff of the 2nd Division and two were on the staff of the 2nd Division Artillery. The three wounded officers belonged to the 2nd Division.

<sup>3</sup> Now Brigadier R. J. Collins, C.M.G., D.S.O., married to a niece of Sir Charles Monro.

brand, seated at a table in a low-ceilinged room. All around the staff were sleeping, almost concealed in straw. The French General was using the almost undecipherable 1/80000 map, over which he pored interminably, wavering this way and that and unable to come to any decision. "Monro," says Collins, "must have been near the end of his tether by then, but his patience was simply marvellous." He spoke French fluently, and courteously and gently led the Frenchman to decide on a sound plan of action. It was 2 a.m. when the conference finished and Collins started to return to the 1st Corps, filled with admiration for the Commander of the 2nd Division.

Later in the night after the corps commander had also lain down and gone to sleep there was a sudden loud cry and everyone jumped up under the impression that an alarm had been given. It proved to have come from one of the sleepers, who had been suddenly awakened by a goat, which, wandering into the room, had sat down on his face.

Two or three days later, the 2nd Division Headquarters having moved back to a village closer to Ypres, Collins was again sent with a message. To continue in his own words, "We were all getting pretty well beat by then and knowing, as I did, that we had nothing in hand and that more German troops were expected my nerve was a bit shaken. I suppose I showed it, because I well remember the General (Monro), who met me outside his headquarters, devoting several minutes to assuring me that things were not so bad as they looked, that the 2nd Division, or what was left of it, was still full of fight and that he was sure we could stick it out. I know that his steady level-headed courage that day put me to shame, and it was based on a better knowledge of the actual situation in the front line than even I had got."

General Monro perceived, at an early stage, the desirability of sending men home on leave. At the first opportunity, when his division was withdrawn into rest billets, he represented the matter to Sir Douglas Haig, who passed it on to Lord French. Soon afterwards leave was opened to all ranks, as far as circumstances permitted, and arrangements made for the transportation of leave men to England. The leave concession would doubtless have come, in any case, in the course of time, but it was General Monro who, with his vigilant care for the welfare and contentment of his men, hastened its advent.

Writing from Hazebrouck, where his headquarters were established while the division was in rest billets during the last days of November, 1914, Monro says: "Every day without

exception, the Germans have attacked us—fresh corps, one after another—and we have had no relief by any troops, so there has been very little time to do anything. Our troops have recently been relieved and sent back to an area of rest. The men want sleep, food and rest very badly now. The Kaiser was in front of us a short time ago, urging his troops on ; now he is supposed to be back at Potsdam. I often wonder, when comparing war in the present circumstances to the period of the Seven Years' War, the relationship in which they stand."

On the reorganization of the British Expeditionary Force, December 26th, 1914, Monro took over the command of the 1st Corps with the rank of Lieutenant General from Sir Douglas Haig, who went to command the First Army. On January 1st, 1915, he writes : " I have been translated from the 2nd Division to the 1st Corps, so when you write next please address me as commanding the 1st Corps. They say this new billet gives more emoluments, so one ought to be pleased, yet my thoughts are centred in a different channel, you know well what they are, so any satisfaction is tempered to a great degree. . . . We are housed in a very queer French château. I don't think anyone in the world ever designed so senseless a house." The house referred to was the château at Hinges, well known to many members of the 1st Corps, Indian Corps, 11th Corps and First Army Staffs.

Brigadier Collins describes an occasion when he was the general staff officer on night duty at corps headquarters and had just made out the early morning report to the First Army that all was quiet on the western front of the corps, when the stillness of dawn combined with an easterly wind made artillery, and even machine-gun and rifle fire, distinctly audible from the neighbourhood of Givenchy, which was hardly ever a " quiet " spot. He took his message to the signal office and as he opened the door was astonished to see General Monro, in dressing gown and pyjamas, asking almost nervously of the signal officer what all the firing was and whether there was any news of an attack. As soon as Collins had got him outside the signal office, he asked the General if he could not trust his general staff if all was well on the corps front or not. Monro became like a schoolboy caught in the act of stealing apples and promised he would not do it again !

It was a curious contrast to the strength of mind and imperturbability which he had displayed during the first battle of Ypres. It was an instance of that curious feeling of nervousness which many of the strongest leaders felt when removed from

close contact with the fighting line and after the tremendous strain which the first three months of the war had put upon them.

In January the corps headquarters moved to Béthune and towards the end of the month were established at Choques.

General Monro's name appeared in the *London Gazette* of March 3rd, 1915, as a Knight Commander of the Bath.

The Prince of Wales was attached for some time to the 1st Corps staff. One early morning he was missing, and it came to Sir Charles' ears that His Royal Highness was heading for the front trenches with his old company of Grenadiers. The General ordered his car and was soon in pursuit. When he came abreast of the Prince of Wales' company he beckoned to His Royal Highness, who somewhat reluctantly came to the side of the car. "I heard what you said, Prince," said Sir Charles, "'Here is that damned old general after me again.' Jump into the car or you will spoil my appetite for breakfast." The Prince, appreciating the tactful, but firm attitude of his corps commander, laughingly entered the car and was driven back to his duties at corps headquarters. Sir Charles often spoke admiringly of the Prince of Wales' spirit as evinced in his frequent attempts to rejoin his regiment, the Grenadier Guards, when they were in the trenches.

Sir Charles realized sooner than most people that the War was not going to convert England into a land fit for heroes to live in, for as early as February 14th, 1915, we find him writing: "Since Christmas time we have been kept very busy by the Bosches, as the French call them. . . . We have been having the most miserable winter, constant rain and fog, although the inhabitants say that it has been a most favourable one. The fact is that this part of France is a horrible and filthy part of the world, offering no attractions of any kind. I try to get as many of my people away as I can, especially the regimental officers. They are the people who get a rough time, and after a short spell in England they come back quite bucked up. It establishes also a condition of sympathy between us all if they think we are anxious about their welfare."<sup>1</sup> "You seem to have had a good dose of the Belgians, poor creatures. They are,

<sup>1</sup> It is due to the memory of those who endured through that first winter of the War that what they suffered should not be forgotten. In the History of the 2nd Division it is written: "It is doubtful whether Hannibal's legions crossing the Alps, or Napoleon's veterans trudging across the snow-covered plains of Russia in the retreat from Moscow, fared worse than those gallant men who stood for days in water reaching half-way up their benumbed bodies, suffering intense agonies from cold and exposure, to say nothing of the constant shelling which by day and by night went on almost without ceasing."

I fear, very helpless often. If they had only accepted the principle of military service they would perhaps be in a better position. They are a very rich people and could have afforded to have expended much more than they did in warlike preparation. The side with the biggest armies will come out top in this business. What a period of financial embarrassment will succeed after this war is over, and we in England will have plenty of labour troubles to tackle."

On February 23rd he again expresses his disgust with the topographical conditions: "Such a miserable country, a low-lying marshy part of France, yet the people thrive; they are prosperous and wealthy. They derive their prosperity from coal and beetroot. We are stuck here opposite to the Bosches holding all the dry parts and avoiding the wet. It is tedious, anxious work for the officers and men and when the country gets drier we may be able to do something. The Bosches have nothing to offer to make a settlement probable, so we must go on, for there can be only one solution to this great problem facing Europe."

Early in May the headquarters returned to Béthune. One evening General Monro had just left his bedroom in order to go to dinner when a shell came through the roof. It made a great mess of the room, and had it come two or three minutes earlier the general's career would have been ended.

The middle of June the corps Headquarters moved to La Buissière.

General Monro continued in command of the 1st Corps, taking part in the battles of Aubers Ridge and Festubert and Givenchy, until July, 1915. On the 15th of that month he was appointed to the command of the newly formed Third Army, having Major General A. Lynden-Bell<sup>1</sup> as his senior general staff officer and Major General W. Campbell<sup>2</sup> as his D.A. and Q.M.G. The appointment of Lieutenant Colonel Lord Herbert Scott as his military secretary brought him the companionship of one who had been a pupil of his at Hythe, where the friendship had been cemented which lasted till death came to break it. Lord Herbert Scott remained as his military secretary throughout the whole of his commands of the Third and First Armies in France and accompanied him also to Gallipoli. Another officer came to his staff at this time who was in close association with him from then onwards, till the end, namely, Major Bridges,

<sup>1</sup> Now Major General Sir Arthur Lynden-Bell, K.C.B., K.C.M.G.

<sup>2</sup> Now Lieutenant General Sir Walter Campbell, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., late Q.M.G. to the Forces.



CHARLES MONRO

*Aged 19.*



R.A.M.C., who was with Sir Charles in France, Gallipoli, India and Gibraltar in the official capacity of Staff Surgeon.

The Third Army had its Headquarters at Beauquesne, and the Army Commander used often to ride out in the afternoons in company with Herbert Scott and an aide-de-camp and observe the ground which afterwards became famous as the battle-field of the Somme, but which in those days was regarded as a peaceful area.

Sir Charles spoke French well and was fond of chatting with any French peasants he met during his rides. Herbert Scott recounts that one day they came across a toothless old hag, but one who still possessed a merry twinkle in her aged eye. General Monro must needs talk to her and ended his conversation with "Madame must have been a great beauty in her day!" "Monsieur is right," said the toothless one. "And," said the General, "I expect the boys were all coming after you!" "True, Monsieur, the boys were all after me, so much so in fact, the gendarmerie in my district had all their work cut out to keep them in order." The old dame was delighted with the happy speech of the English General and imagined herself at once as having been a Queen of Beauty, which seemed doubtful to Scott and the General. "But we never can tell with the French," said Sir Charles; "you will find a famous dancer of the past gladly taking the pennies in the cloakroom of a Paris theatre."

General (now Marshal) Pétain visited Sir Charles one day and stayed for lunch. During the meal he enquired how the young officers amused themselves, and did they find any charming female society in Amiens to while away their leisure moments.

"Oh!" Sir Charles replied, "my young officers do not confide their love affairs in me."

"That's true," said General Pétain, "when we are young we are all discretion, but when we come to your and my age, dear General, we boast of any conquest from the houstops!"

Sir Charles had a special gift for addressing a body of troops. It is not everyone who is able to address the British soldier collectively, to strike a mean between that which is ineffective and that which will appeal to the man in the ranks. The heroics which are easy and natural to most foreigners sound bombastic in the ears of the British soldier and may easily become the subject for ridicule. Monro always struck the right note. He seems to have had a thorough understanding of the mind of the British soldier. His addresses to officers will not be forgotten by those who were present.

In the last chapter of Sir William Robertson's book *From*



*Private to Field Marshal* is told the following story. "Why on earth do you want bands?" once demanded a staff officer of a general who was then serving on the West Front and had suggested that the regimental bands—left behind in England—should be sent out. "Why on earth do you ask such a d—d silly question?" inquired the general in reply. "But since you ask, I will tell you. I want my men occasionally to hear 'It's a long, long way to Tipperary' and their other favourite music-hall songs, and on Sundays to hear the church hymns they were accustomed to hear when they were boys at home." The writer has the Field Marshal's permission to disclose the identity of the general mentioned in the above tale—it was Sir Charles Monro. The bands were sent out soon afterwards.

Few things annoyed Sir Charles so much as "non possumus" formalism in official correspondence, such as letters which began, "It is not understood why in your communication number so-and-so dated . . . etc., etc." The writer recalls an occasion when he brought Sir Charles a letter from a very senior officer of a higher staff, which opened in the above fashion. "Write back and tell him," said the Army Commander, "that if it is not understood it is because he is a b y old mummy incapable of understanding anything, and the sooner he returns to his sarcophagus the better." A reply was sent, but in somewhat milder terms than those suggested by Sir Charles.

Sir Charles had a premonition that he would not be left long with the Third Army. In October, 1915, he was directed to report himself at the War Office in London, and here he was told that he was to take over the command of the Gallipoli operations from General Sir Ian Hamilton.

#### VERSES BY A SUBALTERN OF C COY. 2/R.D.F.

(Found amongst the very few papers left by Sir Charles Monro, and reproduced here with apologies to the unknown poet for publication, without his permission.)

- A is our Army, which with impunity  
Bill said he'd smash at his first opportunity.
- B is the Base, which is called St. Nazaire,  
No longer the home of the gallant and fair,
- C is the Charge of the Scottish and London—  
From the papers you'd argue *they only* had done one.
- D is De Wet who thought it was wiser  
To break his allegiance and follow the Kaiser.
- E is the End of this horrible war—  
It will probably last for a century more.

- F are the Flares which never seem lacking,  
Sent by the Germans to see who's attacking.
- G are the Germans, a race much maligned,  
A more peace-loving people you hardly can find.
- H are the Huns, their nearest of kin,  
A pastoral people they are said to have been.
- I am the writer, a perfect nonentity—  
That is the reason I hide my identity.
- J is the Joy on the faces of men  
When they're told they must go down for rations at ten.
- K is the Kaiser who's said to be balmy—  
We always feel safe when he's leading his army.
- L is the Lake that protects us from fire—  
They call it a trench when the weather is drier.
- M stands for Mud, to describe which foul stuff  
Violent blasphemy's hardly enough.
- N is the Noise which we generally hear  
On the night when the Germans are issued with beer.
- O is the Order, obeyed with a yawn,  
Of "Stand to your arms, it's an hour till dawn."
- P is the Post which generally brings  
Parcels of perfectly valueless things.
- Q is the Question we all do abhor  
Concerning the probable end of the war.
- R stands for R-hum, and also for Russians—  
Our two greatest Allies when fighting the Prussians.
- S as you know always stands for Supplies  
Whose excellent qualities no one denies.
- T is Tobacco, that beautiful stuff  
And thanks be to Heaven we've now got enough.
- U stands for Uhlan who's gained notoriety  
Both through his kindness and wonderful piety.
- V is the Voice of the turtle, which bird  
Has been turned into stew, so it's no longer heard.
- W stands for Wine, Women and War,  
We'll see to the first when the latter is o'er.
- X is a perfectly horrible letter—  
I'll leave it alone and I couldn't do better.
- Y stands for Ypres which the Germans desire.  
They shelled it as soon as they had to retire.
- Z stands for Zeppelins who long to raid  
A circus, a square, and a certain arcade.

## CHAPTER IV

Gallipoli project ill-considered and ill-prepared. The means did not exist to carry it through. Wellington's views on a similar project. Cabinet dazzled by magnitude of object, but in war nothing so bad as failure and defeat. War Office opinion in 1906. Ignored by Cabinet. Soldiers and politicians. Mr. Churchill's brave words. The essentials for success of an overseas expedition. Ian Hamilton's report on landing. Deficiencies in preparation. 1882 a contrast. Monro's interviews with authorities in London. Lord Northcliffe and intelligence. Monro's instructions. His report. Comments. It is the fruits of Victory, not the Victory, which count. Effect of report on War Committee. Policy and Strategy. Lord Kitchener's attitude. Opinion of corps commanders. Strong opposition to evacuation. Apprehension regarding effect on Muhammadans. Kitchener's wire to Birdwood. Monro virtually superseded. Kitchener goes to Gallipoli. Changes his views after personal inspection. Conferences. Monro breaks his ankle. Kitchener's report. Churchill's strictures. Comments.

**A**LTHOUGH Monro did not appear as an actor in the Gallipoli theatre of war until the last scene, he played the dominant part in that scene. In order to understand his rôle and the momentous nature of the decision which he was called upon to make and which brought that disastrous expedition to its close, some acquaintance with the previous scenes of the drama, in so far as they have a bearing on that decision, is essential.

One has no sort of right to expect success in any military operation unless it is sound in conception and thorough in its preparation. Whether the Gallipoli adventure was sound in conception or not, has been the subject of much controversy. It is not sufficient to say that the political and moral results, which would follow on the forcing of the Dardanelles and the capture of Constantinople, would be tremendous. The point is, was it a feasible naval or amphibious operation? It is not sufficient to say that the repercussions throughout the states of Europe and in the Muhammadan world would have a remarkable effect. War requires more definite and concrete objectives than repercussions.

Can one assume that the forcing of the Dardanelles by the Navy alone, followed by the capture of the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* and the bombardment of Constantinople, would have had any decisive effect in bringing the war to a quicker con-

clusion? Such an assumption is merely conjecture, and "war is not a conjectural art."

Again, assuming the Dardanelles forced and the British in possession of the Gallipoli Peninsula, what then? The answer is to be found in Lord Kitchener's instructions to Sir Ian Hamilton. "As soon as the Russian Corps has joined up with our troops combined plans of operation against the Turkish army (if it still remains in European Turkey) will be undertaken with a view to obtaining its defeat and surrender." . . . "Should the Turkish army have retired to the east side of the Bosphorus, the occupation of Constantinople and the western territories of Turkey may be proceeded with." It is evident from these instructions that there was no clear and definite idea in the minds of the originators of the expedition regarding its ultimate aim. The destruction of the Turkish army was only contingent on its remaining in European Turkey, otherwise it was to be ignored. But would it let itself be ignored? The Turkish army having been thus disposed of, Constantinople and the western territories of Turkey "may" be occupied.

When vagueness and uncertainty exist in one's own mind, vagueness and uncertainty will show itself in one's orders to others. The Commander-in-Chief of the Dardanelles Expedition was given no indication of the probable strength of the Turkish forces available to meet him, of what transport, hospital, engineers' equipments would be likely to be supplied to him for the organization of his base and lines of communication in order to make his excursion into the Western Territories, or of the ultimate purpose of occupying those territories. No consideration was given as regards length of time and means, in medium and heavy artillery and munitions, which might be required to bring about the defeat or surrender of the Turkish army, although all recent military history pointed to the likelihood of prolonged and stubborn defence on the part of the Turks—a likelihood which was subsequently borne out in the Gallipoli Peninsula, Palestine, and Mesopotamia.

Had our quarrel been with Turkey alone, the occupation of the Turkish capital and territory would in certain circumstances have been a perfectly justifiable objective. And had Britain been in possession of inexhaustible resources to enable her to prosecute the war on the Western Front and at the same time to undertake the reduction of Turkey, the advantages to be gained by the possession of the Straits, and the opening of the Sea of Marmora and occupation of Constantinople would have been worth the price. Russia would be able to export her wheat,

of which she had more than enough for her own consumption, to Allied countries, which were in need of every grain they could get ; Turkey would be cut in two ; the moral effect throughout the Muhammadan world would be immense ; the Balkan States might be induced to remain neutral or even to come in on our side ; Russia was calling to us to make a diversion in her favour and this was the best way of making it.

The simple fact remains that at this period of the War we did not possess the means with which to maintain our share in the immense struggle on the Western Front and at the same time carry on a major operation elsewhere. It was a case of cutting our coat according to our cloth ; of denying ourselves the luxuries of strategy in order to be able to meet its necessities. Right up to the declaration of war our statesmen had refused to look at the facts which were staring them in the face ; or to heed the warnings of Lord Roberts and many others. Seeing they would not see, hearing they would not hear ; and many thousands of young British lives went to fill the gaps in training, guns and munitions which had been caused by their vain folly. Sir Ian Hamilton, in his evidence before the Dardanelles Commission, said, " The vital thing was to make good, and to make good we ought to have had ample artillery, especially howitzers. We had not, and there was nothing for it but to try and get on, as you say, by a sacrifice of human life."

In 1812 a project was formed to send an expedition to Italy, where, it was argued, splendid results might be achieved in freeing Italy from Napoleonic domination and where success would be most efficacious in assisting Wellington's operations in Spain. Neither the greatness of the project nor the apparent facility of execution weighed with Wellington. " The recovery of Italy would," he said, " be a glorious and might be a feasible exploit, but it was only in prospect. Spain was the better field, the war in the Peninsula existed, a solid base was established there . . . England could not support two armies. The principle of concentrating power on an important point was applicable here as on the field of battle ; Italy might even be the more vital point, yet it would be advisable to continue with the war already established in Spain ; it would be better to give up Spain and direct the whole power of England against Italy, rather than undertake double operations on such an extensive scale when the means were only sufficient to sustain one."

Was this the time when locked in deadly embrace with the most formidable enemy we have encountered since the days of Napoleon ? Was this the time to undertake a great overseas

expedition with the constant drain in ships, men and munitions which such an expedition, with its lines of communication exposed to submarine attack, must entail? The War Cabinet, composed of bolder natures than Wellington, decided that it was the time, that the magnitude of the object to be gained justified the attempt.

During the Peninsular War, Marshal Beresford made a proposal for a certain operation and supported it by similar reasons. Wellington, in criticizing this proposal, remarked: "I would observe on your principle, viz. that the magnitude of the object would justify the attempt, that in war nothing is so bad as failure and defeat." But the War Cabinet did not consider failure and defeat. Success glittered before their eyes. So having advertised the project by a preliminary bombardment and given the Turks plenty of time to mine the Straits and prepare the Peninsula for defence, they proceeded to launch the most disastrous expedition which has ever sailed from the British shores.<sup>1</sup>

In 1906 the War Office had carefully considered in conjunction with the Admiralty the feasibility of a combined naval and military attack upon the Dardanelles. As the result of these deliberations the General Staff issued a memorandum in which we find as follows:

"When the question of despatching a military expeditionary force to the Gallipoli Peninsula comes to be passed in review, the first point to be considered is the general one of whether a landing is possible at all, in face of active opposition under modern conditions. In regard to this, history affords no guide. The whole conditions of war have been revolutionized since such an operation was last attempted.

"Military opinion, however, will certainly lean strongly to the view that no landing could nowadays be effected in the presence of an enemy, unless the co-operating naval squadron were in a position to guarantee, with its guns, that the men, horses and vehicles of the landing force should reach the shore unmolested, and that they should find, after disembarkation, a sufficiently extended area, free from hostile fire, to enable them to form up for battle on suitable ground.

<sup>1</sup> It might be urged that the arguments advanced against the Gallipoli project would equally apply to the Palestine operations. But there is this great difference. When active operations were commenced against the Turks in Palestine, armaments and munitions were forthcoming in sufficient quantities to meet the requirements of both the Eastern and Western theatres, and India had begun to develop her resources. Even so, Palestine had to be largely denuded of British troops. Had it not been for India, and the man power that she supplied, Allenby's final victory could not have been consummated.

"In the opinion of the General Staff, a doubt exists as to whether the co-operating fleet would be able to give this absolute guarantee.

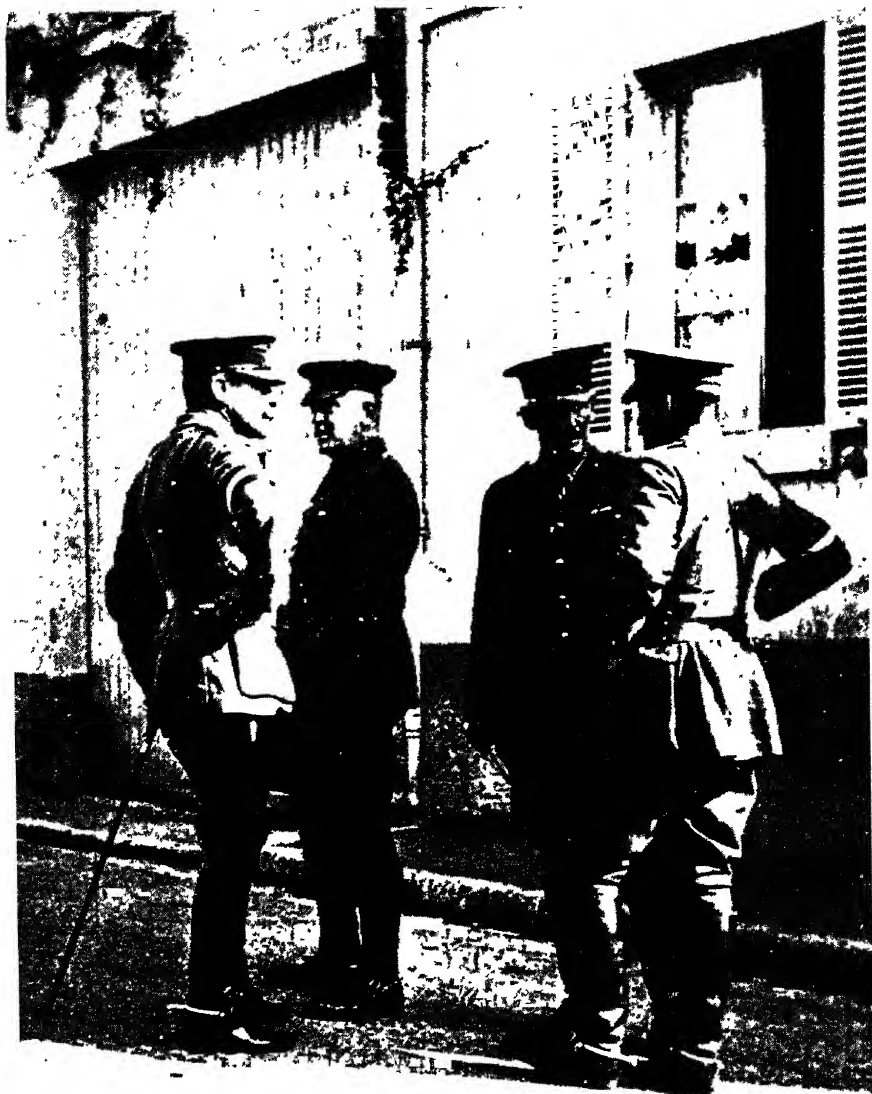
"The successful conclusion of a military operation against the Gallipoli Peninsula must hinge, as already stated, upon the ability of the fleet, not only to dominate the Turkish defences with gunfire, and to crush their field troops during that period of helplessness which exists while an army is in actual process of disembarkation, but also to cover the advancing troops once ashore, until they could gain a firm foothold and establish themselves on high ground in rear of the coast defences of the Dardanelles.

"However brilliant as a combination of war and however fruitful in its consequences, such an operation would be, were it crowned with success, the General Staff in view of the risks involved, were not prepared to recommend its being attempted."

The War Council had cognizance of this memorandum; it was circulated to the members. It was held to be inapplicable to the present situation. Whatever may have been the reasons for this decision, they have never been clearly stated. The simple fact remains that the Gallipoli enterprise had after careful examination been "turned down" by expert opinion, which opinion was now ignored.

It is a melancholy fact that the soldier and the politician rarely see eye to eye. The common charge brought by the politician against the soldier is that he lacks imagination. The common charge brought by the soldier against the politician is that he will not concentrate effort on decisive points and that he will waste strength in pursuit of seductive but unprofitable adventures. The statesman can generally condone his errors by eloquence. The soldier has no such refuge. Who is right and who is wrong in any given set of circumstances must be left to the verdict of history, and that verdict has almost invariably been given in favour of the soldier. Napoleon has pronounced on the danger in strategy of "seeing too many things at once, as for me I see only one thing. . . ." Throughout the Great War, we were seeing things half the world over, instead of keeping our eyes fixed on the vital point.

Whilst the fighting for the possession of Gallipoli was in progress, Mr. Churchill made a speech in which he said: "Beyond these four miles of ridge and scrub on which our soldiers, our French comrades, our gallant Australian and New Zealand fellow-subjects are now battling, lie the downfall of a hostile empire, the destruction of an enemy's fleet and army, the fall



AUGUST 1914

SIR CHARLES MONRO  
SIR DOUGLAS HAIG

COLONEL PERCEVAL  
BRIG.-GEN. GOUGH





of a world-famous capital and probably the accession of powerful allies. The struggle will be heavy, the risks numerous, the losses cruel ; but victory, when it comes, will make amends for all. . . . Through the narrows of the Dardanelles and across the ridges of the Gallipoli Peninsula lie some of the shortest paths to a triumphant peace." Brave words ; and one would conclude that behind them lay the knowledge that everything possible had been done to ensure the victory which they so confidently predicted. Unfortunately, this was far from being the case.

It is always easy to be wise *after* the event ; it is sometimes possible to be wise *before* the event. It is possible, if not always easy, to decide on a definite objective. It is possible, although by no means easy at times, to adhere to certain principles of war, neglect of which leads to disaster or at least to non-success. It is true that nothing is certain in war ; that " Fortune, that name for the unknown combinations of infinite power," may bring to naught the plans of the most consummate commander. But it is certain that no great undertaking will succeed without plan or preparation.

Of all operations of war, a descent on a hostile coast is that which requires the most careful preparation and meticulous attention to details. The observation of certain general principles deduced from past experiences has long been accepted by soldiers as essential in connection with debarkations which may be opposed by the enemy. The most important of these principles is the necessity of maintaining absolute secrecy as to the destination of the expedition, points of assembly and dates of sailing. The fullest use should be made of the mobility and certainty conferred by modern steam power on an expeditionary fleet to distract the enemy's attention from the real point of attack, and, owing to the power of modern weapons, every endeavour should be made to get the troops on shore unopposed. Every unit of the expeditionary force should be embarked complete and with its own supply of provisions and land transport, and suitable craft for landing. A large supply of roomy flat-boats, stern wheel steamers and lighters should be provided and carried with the transport, each ship carrying its own. Provision should also be made for construction of piers, jetties and the erection of cranes. There must be a good water supply for the troops. The reconnaissance of the proposed landing-place should be rapid and carried out at the latest possible moment before landing. And finally a good base as close to the landing place as possible must be organized without delay.

Were any of these essential conditions fulfilled? Not one. The military part of the expedition was proclaimed by a preliminary naval<sup>1</sup> bombardment. No attempt was made to conceal its destination, which might easily have been done by announcing Ayas Bay or some other point as the intended destination, and by making certain dispositions and feints which would give colour to this false intention. And having given the Turks full notice that the Gallipoli Peninsula was our aim and object, we proceeded to allow them full time to prepare for our coming. We may turn to Sir Ian Hamilton's despatches to see with what result.

*Extract from Ian Hamilton's despatch.*

"Both of these buildings, as well as No. 1 Fort, had been long bombarded by the fleet, and the guns of the forts had been put out of action; but their crumbled walls and the ruined outskirts of the village afforded cover for riflemen, while from the terraced slopes already described the defenders were able to command the open beach, as a stage is overlooked from the balconies of a theatre. On the very margin of the beach a strong barbed-wire entanglement, made of heavier metal and longer barbs than I have ever seen elsewhere, ran right across from the old fort of Sedd-el-Bahr to the foot of the north-western headland. Two-thirds of the way up the ridge a second and even stronger entanglement crossed the amphitheatre, passing in front of the old barrack and ending in the outskirts of the village. A third transverse entanglement, joining these two, ran up the hill near the eastern end of the beach, and almost at right angles to it. Above the upper entanglement, the ground was scored with the enemy's trenches, in one of which four pom-poms were emplaced; in others were dummy pom-poms to draw fire, while the débris of the shattered buildings on either flank afforded cover and concealment for a number of machine-guns, which brought a cross-fire to bear on the ground already swept by fire from the ridge.

"W beach consists of a strip of deep, powdery sand some 350 yards long and from 15 to 40 yards wide, situated immediately south of Tekke Barnu, where a small gully running down to the sea opens out a break in the cliffs. On either flank of the beach the ground rises precipitously, but, in the centre, a number of

<sup>1</sup> The responsibility for this bombardment cannot be charged to the War Council. It was ordered by the Admiralty, unknown to the War Council, and the onus of it must, therefore, lie principally on Mr. Churchill, as First Lord of the Admiralty.

sand dunes afford a more gradual access to the ridge overlooking the sea. Much time and ingenuity had been employed by the Turks in turning this landing-place into a death trap. Close to the water's edge a broad wire entanglement extended the whole length of the shore and a supplementary barbed network lay concealed under the surface of the sea in the shallows. Land mines and sea mines had been laid. The high ground overlooking the beach was strongly fortified with trenches to which the gully afforded a natural covered approach. A number of machine-guns also were cunningly tucked away into holes in the cliff so as to be immune from a naval bombardment whilst they were converging their fire on the wire entanglements.

"The crest of the hill overlooking the beach was in its turn commanded by high ground to the north-west and south-east, and especially by two strong infantry redoubts near point 138. Both these redoubts were protected by wire entanglements about twenty feet broad, and could be approached only by a bare glacis-like slope leading up from the high ground above W beach or from the Cape Helles lighthouse. In addition, another separate entanglement ran down from these two redoubts to the edge of the cliff near the lighthouse, making intercommunication between V and W beaches impossible until these redoubts had been captured."

It is difficult to find the words in which to express the gallantry of troops who could effect a landing under such conditions. It would be easier, but it would serve no purpose, to find the words in which to deplore the set of circumstances which led to such a waste of gallantry.

Although secrecy had been thrown overboard by the higher personages concerned with the expedition, it might have been expected that the staff work connected with the preparation would have been up to the mark and that those responsible for it would have acted on past experience if not able to do so by the light of their own intelligences. But here also we find former lessons ignored and forethought discarded.

Equipments did not accompany their units but were sent on other ships. They were loaded, in the majority of cases, without any consideration of the order in which they would be required on landing. No arrangements were made for the supply or construction of piers, jetties or derricks. Engineer stores were inadequate. There were not nearly enough lighters or tugs or boats for the conveyance of stores, munitions and transport of sick. Accommodation which would be required for sick and wounded was greatly underestimated. Medical stores and

appliances were appallingly deficient.<sup>1</sup> The necessity for special provision of an ample supply of fresh water was not foreseen. No plans were laid or staffs appointed for the establishment of a base and organization of a proper line of communication. One of the consequences of this lack of forethought was that when the transports began to assemble at Mudros, it was only then discovered that the water supply was totally insufficient. The expedition proceeded therefore to Alexandria, where a partial reorganization of the force took place, and incidentally more valuable time was given to the Turks in which to get ready to receive us.

The military maxim that "Time is always in favour of the defence" was either unknown or forgotten by everyone concerned in the despatch of the expedition. Eventually, after the waste of much valuable time, energy and labour, a suitable base was established at Mudros, Alexandria proving far too distant for the purpose, and a line of communication organized through the efforts of three trained and capable staff officers: Major-General E. Altham, Colonel G. MacMunn, Major Armstrong.<sup>2</sup>

It has been said that it is easy to be wise after the event. It has also been pointed out that England has sent forth many expeditions, which would have furnished lessons for guidance in the organization of this, the latest. One example will serve to show the extent to which these lessons were disregarded.

At the British landing in Egypt in 1882 under Lord Wolseley, each unit embarked on board its own ship, with its transport and tentage complete. When the Canal was clear, the British ships entered it arranged so that the troops they were conveying were in the following order: First came five hundred marines with some lighters, then the disembarkation ship conveying more lighters and working parties; then came the remainder of two battalions of marines with forage, coal, railway staff and some engineers; then two brigades of infantry, some Army Service Corps companies, mounted infantry, some ambulances and two

<sup>1</sup> Sir F. Treves in his evidence before the Dardanelles Commission is reported as having commented upon the absence of arrangements connected with the despatch of hospital ships, and the indecision which existed as regards their destination, and Brigadier General Howse, V.C., of the Australian Forces went so far as to say that when the War was over, he would recommend his Government under no condition whatever to trust again to the medical arrangements that might be made by the Imperial authorities for the care of Australian sick and wounded.

<sup>2</sup> Now Lieutenant General Sir E. Altham, K.C.B., K.C.M.G. Lieutenant General Sir G. MacMunn, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O. Lieutenant General Armstrong, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.

field hospitals, then the cavalry brigade, followed by the field artillery and some railway plant.

The selection of the smooth waters of an inland lake for the landing place of the force showed a correct appreciation of the difficulties and dangers of a landing on an open coast. The strategic design of landing on Arabi's flank, where there existed the advantages of a railway and fresh water canal, was well conceived, but it could not have been carried out without interruption had not the strictest secrecy been maintained and aided by the ruse of announcing an objective point quite other than the real one, and allowing the false point to become known. Great forethought was shown in bringing locomotives, rolling stock, and railway plant, wooden piers, wharves, house-boats, tugs and lighters and a condenser ship for drinking water. Our foothold at Alexandria was the base of the whole expedition and demonstrated the vast importance of establishing a base, if possible, on the enemy's coast, or near to it, as a preliminary to the main expedition.<sup>1</sup>

It is not suggested that the Gallipoli or any other expedition should have followed the 1882 landing letter for letter. There must be always special conditions in each case which call for special treatment. But there is much that is applicable and common to all. And what a contrast between the method, order and foresight of 1882 and the deplorable huffer-muffer of 1915 !

There is no necessity to enter here into an account of the fighting for the possession of Gallipoli. The troops did all that it was possible for troops to do. After months of heroic effort, culminating in the great August attack of 1915, we were no nearer Constantinople than at the start.

The thoughts of the War Cabinet now began to turn towards the possible necessity of evacuation. Sir Ian Hamilton was asked for his opinion. He replied to the effect that such a step was "unthinkable." "It would not be wise," he said, "to reckon on getting out of Gallipoli with less loss than that of half the total force, as well as guns, which must be used to the last, stores, railway plant and horses . . . one quarter would probably get off quite easily, then the trouble would begin."

The War Cabinet were becoming anxious and it was decided to recall Ian Hamilton and replace him by a general who, coming with a fresh and unbiased mind, would be better able to advise

<sup>1</sup> Dardanelles Commission Report : " We think that when it was decided to undertake an important military expedition to the Gallipoli Peninsula, sufficient consideration was not given to the measures necessary to carry out such an expedition with success."

on this question of evacuation. General Monro was selected for the purpose.

Before the commencement of the Great War General Monro's name was little known outside the military circle. From August, 1914, onwards his reputation as a commander had been steadily growing among the public, and confidence in his judgment becoming more firmly established in the minds of his colleagues and army contemporaries. Consequently the news of his appointment to the Mediterranean command in place of General Sir Ian Hamilton received unqualified approval.

Sir Charles received many epistolary proofs and press notices of the trust reposed in him. To mention only two, the late General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien wrote: "... I am indeed glad you are at the head of affairs in the Mediterranean, for the cool head and calm brain you possess are just what we want there." And the Secretary, the General Federation of Trade Unions, "To-day's papers contain the announcement of your new appointment. I hardly know, in view of the tremendous difficulties you will have to face, whether to congratulate you or not, but I do sincerely assure you of our confidence in your ability and our earnest desire for your success."

Having handed over the command of the Third Army to General Allenby, General Monro arrived in London on October 20th, 1915, and spent the best part of the next two days in interviews with the Secretary of State and General Staff. He left London at 5 a.m. on October 22nd, accompanied by his Chief of Staff, General Lynden Bell, and his military secretary, Lieutenant Colonel Lord Herbert Scott. There were only a few persons on the platform at that early hour of a chilly autumn morning and one of these was Mr. Churchill, who, with characteristic energy, had risen before his accustomed hour in order to speed on his way the Commander-elect of the Great Venture of which he himself was the prime mover. Throwing a bundle of papers through the window as the train moved off, Mr. Churchill uttered a farewell message. "Remember," he said, "that a withdrawal from Gallipoli would be as great a disaster as Corunna." The analogy was not a happy one and little likely to impress so well-instructed a soldier as General Monro. It is true that the campaign of Corunna ended in a retreat and in an embarkation carried out in the face of the enemy. But the British army, before quitting Spain, had achieved a very real and lasting success. Moore with his 24,000 men had arrested the course of Napoleon at the head of 330,000 soldiers. He had succoured Spain in her hour of greatest need. Without a Corunna the French talons

would have been so firmly fixed in Spain that Wellington would never have succeeded in extricating her with the means which were at his disposal.

Whatever the final result to the British army, the campaign taken as a whole was a success. The Gallipoli campaign was an unrelieved disaster, whether the army was withdrawn or not, for no atom of success had been gained and, as subsequently appeared, there was no glimmer of hope in the minds of the most competent authorities that there ever could be any success.

On the evening of General Monro's departure Lord Northcliffe telephoned to Lieutenant Colonel Lord Herbert Scott saying that he had heard that Lord Herbert was accompanying Sir Charles as military secretary, and asking him to call and see him at *The Times* office that evening, as he had some valuable information concerning the position of the enemy. At the interview, Lord Northcliffe detailed in his clear manner the history and exact position of our troops and that of the enemy. He then went on to state what the enemy were doing with regard to bringing up reinforcements, German guns, ammunition, etc. Lord Herbert Scott made careful notes of all Lord Northcliffe told him, and it appeared, after the War, that everything he said was correct.

Lord Herbert did not tell Sir Charles of this interview until after the evacuation, knowing that information from an uncorroborated press source would not be taken kindly by his chief. Later on Lord Herbert Scott was able to tell Lord Northcliffe that Sir Charles Monro was much impressed with the accuracy of the report from the Northcliffe Secret Service in the Near East. He considered it a wonderful service and worthy of the great organiser that Lord Northcliffe undoubtedly was.

What strikes one as strange in connection with this story is, how was it that the War Office failed to impart to General Monro the information that Lord Northcliffe gave to Lord Herbert Scott ; and if they did not give it because they had not got it, why had they not got it, when Lord Northcliffe possessed it ?

General Monro arrived at Mudros on October 27th and spent three strenuous days in going round the positions and making a close inspection of the general situation. According to the instructions which he had received from Lord Kitchener before sailing, he was to report "fully and frankly" on the military situation on the Gallipoli Peninsula and in the Near East generally. He was to consider the best means of removing the existing deadlock on the Peninsula and to give his opinion whether, on purely military grounds, it would be better to evacuate Gallipoli or to



make another attempt to carry it. He was asked to state his estimate of the losses which would be incurred in evacuation, and how many troops he considered would be required to carry the Peninsula, to keep the Straits open and to take Constantinople.

Furthermore, he was required to visit Salonika in order to study the situation in the Near East, created by the Austro-German advance through Servia, and report on the French proposals for our advance to Uskub with a view to keeping open the Serbian line of communication with Salonika. He was also to visit Cairo in order to discuss with the British High Commissioner, Sir H. McMahon, and the General Officer Commanding, Sir J. Maxwell, questions connected with the defence of Egypt.

On the 31st he wired his report to Lord Kitchener. It is a document of great importance and is therefore quoted in major part.

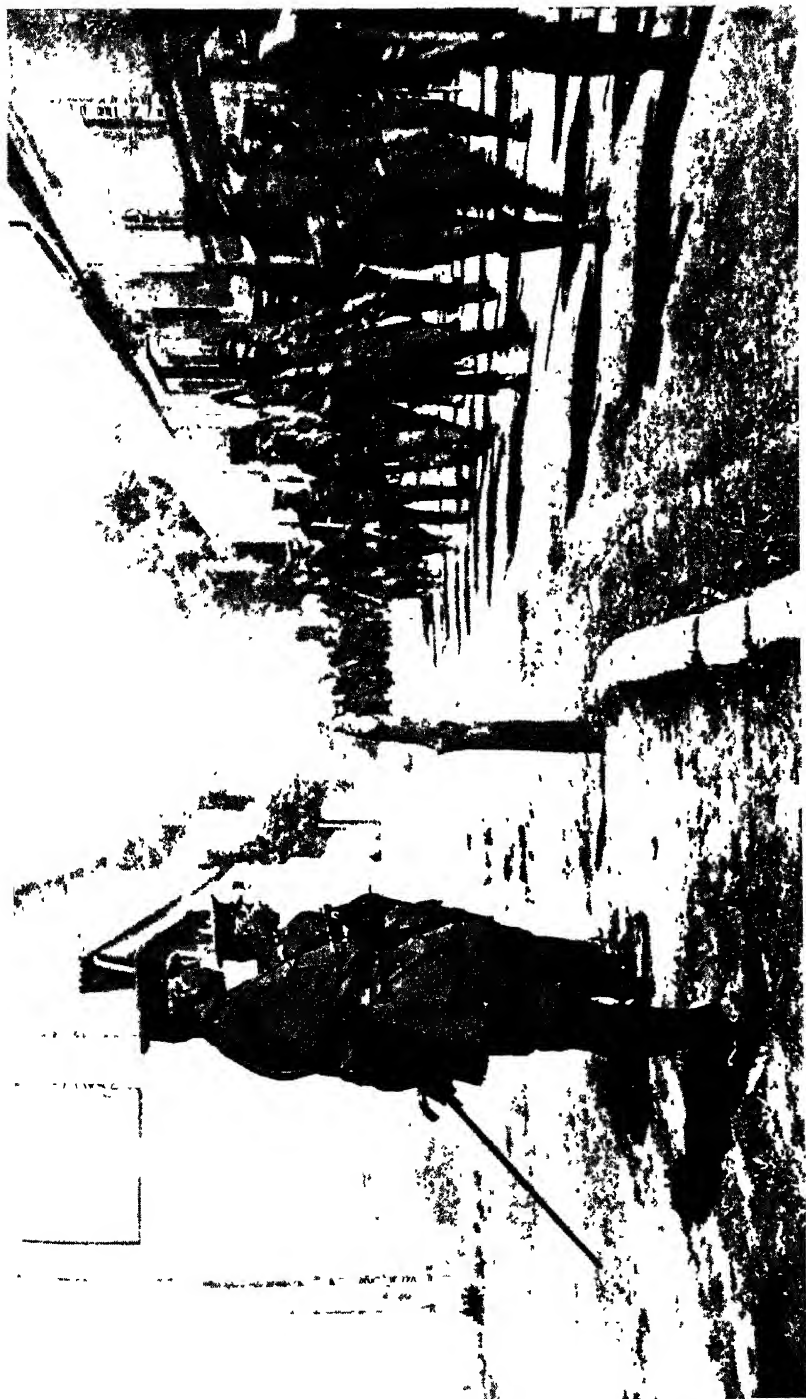
"With the exception of the Australian and New Zealand army corps the troops on the Peninsula are not equal to a sustained effort, owing to inexperienced officers, the want of training of the men, and the depleted condition of many of the units.

"We merely hold the fringe of the shore, and are confronted by the Turks in very formidable entrenchments, with all advantages of position and power of observation of our movements. The beaches are exposed to observed artillery fire, and in the restricted areas all stores are equally exposed. We can no longer count upon any action by surprise as the Turks are in considerably stronger force than they were, and have had ample time to provide against surprise landings.

"Since the flanks of the Turks cannot be attacked, only a frontal attack is possible, and no room is afforded on any of the beaches for the distribution of additional divisions should they be sent, nor is there sufficient space for the deployment of an adequate force of artillery, the action of which would be impaired by poverty of observation and good positions for searching or counter battery effect. Naval guns could only assist to a partial degree.

"In fact an attack could only be prosecuted under the disadvantages of serious lack of depth, and of absence of power of surprise, seeing that our line is, throughout, dominated by the Turks' position. The uncertainty of weather might also seriously hinder the landing of reinforcements and regularity in providing the artillery ammunition to the amount which would be required.

"It is, therefore, my opinion that another attempt to carry the Turkish lines would not offer any hope of success; the Turkish positions are being actively strengthened daily. Our information leads to the belief that heavy guns and ammunition



1914. TROOPS MARCHING THROUGH A FRENCH VILLAGE

CED CHADIERE MONRO AND COLONEL N MALCOLM



are being sent to the Peninsula from Constantinople. Consequently by the time fresh divisions, if available, could arrive, the task of breaking the Turkish line would be considerably more formidable than it is at present.

"On purely military grounds, therefore, in consequence of the grave daily wastage of officers and men which occurs, and owing to the lack of prospect of being able to draw the Turks from their entrenched positions, I recommend the evacuation of the Peninsula.

"I have endeavoured in the expression of my opinion to give full weight to the effect which will be created in the East by our evacuation, and I consider that the force now in the Peninsula, or such portion of it as we may be able to evacuate, would be more favourably placed in Egypt. This force stands in need of rest, reorganization, and especially of training, before it can be usefully employed. The corps and divisional commanders have done splendid work in the Peninsula, but they do not possess the opportunity or time, as they now stand, to create the force into a reliable fighting machine. Hence I think loss of prestige caused by withdrawal would be compensated for in a few months by increased efficiency."

Here is the opinion, frankly and fully delivered, and it is further emphasized in General Monro's final despatch, in which he repeats his reasons for recommending evacuation as follows:

"The position occupied by our troops presented a military situation unique in history. The mere fringe of the coast-line had been secured. The beaches and piers upon which they were dependent for all requirements in personnel and material were exposed to registered and observed artillery fire. Our entrenchments were dominated almost throughout by the Turks. The possible artillery positions were insufficient and defective. The force, in short, held a line possessing every possible military defect. The position was without depth, the communications were insecure and dependent on the weather. No means existed for the concealment and deployment of fresh troops destined for the offensive—whilst the Turks enjoyed full powers of observation, abundant artillery positions, and they had been given the time to supplement the natural advantages which the position presented, by all the devices at the disposal of the Field Engineer.

"(a) It was obvious that the Turks could hold us in front with a small force and prosecute their designs on Baghdad or Egypt or both.

"(b) An advance from the positions we held could not be regarded as a reasonable military operation to expect.

"(c) Even had we been able to make an advance in the Peninsula, our position would not have been ameliorated to any marked degree, and an advance on Constantinople was quite out of the question.

"(d) Since we could not hope to achieve any purpose by remaining on the Peninsula, the appalling cost to the nation involved in consequence of embarking on an overseas expedition with no base available for the rapid transit of stores, supplies and personnel, made it urgent that we should divert the troops locked up on the Peninsula to a more useful theatre.

"Another material factor came prominently before me. The troops on the Peninsula had suffered much from various causes.

"(a) It was not in the first place possible to withdraw them from the shell-swept area as is done when necessary in France, for every corner on the Peninsula is exposed to fire.

"(b) They were much enervated from the diseases which are endemic in that part of Europe in the summer.

"(c) In consequence of the losses which they had suffered in earlier battles, there was a grave dearth of officers, competent to take command of men.

"(d) In order to maintain the numbers needed to hold the front, the Territorial Divisions had been augmented by the attachment of Yeomanry and Mounted Brigades. Makeshifts of this nature very obviously did not tend to create efficiency.

"Other arguments irrefutable in their conclusions, convinced me that a complete evacuation was the only wise course to pursue."

We learn from a communication General Monro made to the Chief of Imperial General Staff on November 17th that his reports of October 31st and November 2nd were based on the opinions he held that the force on the Peninsula was not serving a purpose commensurate with the drain on our resources. It appeared to him that the Turks under German guidance would be in a position to hold us on the Peninsula with a comparatively small force, while operating against Egypt or Baghdad with the bulk of their army.

"On the Dardanelles Peninsula it may be said that the whole of the machinery by which the textbooks contemplate the maintenance and supply of an army was non-existent. The zone commanded by the enemy's guns extended not only to the landing-places on the Peninsula, but even over the sea in the vicinity. The beaches were the advanced depôts and refilling points at which the services of supply had to be carried out under artillery fire. The landing of stores as well as of troops

was only possible under cover of darkness. The sea, the ships, lighters and tugs took, in fact, the place of railways and roads with their railway trains, mechanical transport, etc.—but with this difference, that the use of the latter was subject only to the intervention of the enemy, while that of the former was dependent on the weather.

“Between the beaches and the base of Alexandria, 800 miles to the south, the line of communications had but two harbours, Kephalos Bay on the Island of Imbros, 15 miles roughly from the beaches, and Mudros Bay at a distance of 60 miles. In neither were there any piers, breakwaters, wharves or store-houses before the advent of the troops. On the shores of these two bays there were no roads of any military value, nor buildings fit for military usage.

“The water supply at the islands was, until developed, totally inadequate for our needs. The Peninsula landing-places were open beaches. Kephalos Bay is without protection from the north, and swept by a high sea in northerly gales. In Mudros harbour transshipments and disembarkations were often seriously impeded by a wind from north or south. These difficulties were accentuated by the advent of submarines in the Ægean Sea, on account of which the Vice-Admiral deemed it necessary to prohibit any transport or storeships exceeding 15,000 tons proceeding north of Mudros, and although this rule was relaxed in the case of supply ships proceeding within the netted area of Suvla, it necessitated the transshipment of practically all reinforcements, stores, and supplies—other than those for Suvla—into smaller ships in Mudros harbour. At Suvla and Anzac, disembarkation could only be effected by lighters and tugs, thus for all personnel and equipment there was at least one transshipment, and, for the greater portion of both, two transshipments.”

There are three points which stand out clearly in the report : (1) that the opportunity for surprise having been lost there was no possibility of re-enlisting it in our favour ; (2) that our position did not possess the depth which is required to mount an attack, a requirement which is all the more imperative under the conditions of modern long range weapons of fire ; (3) that the force required rest and reorganization.

Each of these points alone might have constituted sufficient reason for considering the advisability of evacuation ; taken together they were an incontestable argument in its favour.

Reference has already been made to the disregard paid to the element of surprise, that most powerful weapon in the armoury of war. Sea power, fortified by experience, had placed this

weapon in our hands strategically ; we threw it disdainfully aside. Tactically, it was denied to us owing to " serious lack of depth " ; we only held the " fringe of the shore," and the Turkish positions dominated those held by us. But it is not only for the purpose of surprise that depth is required—" you should make a start from such a powerful defensive order that the enemy will not dare to attack you . . . the whole art of war consists in a well-prepared and extremely circumspect defensive followed by a rapid and audacious attack." (Napoleon.)

It is not possible to have a powerful and circumspect defensive order when there is no room in which to organize it, when the enemy dominates you and has continuous observation of your dispositions. The attack under modern conditions of war is a complicated undertaking. Space is required for the siting of the guns of various ranges ; for the dumping of ammunition, engineer and other stores ; for ambulances and field hospitals ; for battle positions of commanders, and artillery observation posts ; above all, for the assembly in depth of the troops destined to make the attack, for supports, for reserves.

The necessity for depth was plainly evidenced in the war in Manchuria and was amply confirmed by the experiences in the Great War, up to the time of the Gallipoli Campaign. In fact, the success of a modern attack against an enemy depends nowadays as much on the organization of the back areas of the battlefield and the arrangements existing therein for sustaining the attack as it does on the tactics and leadership of the troops in the fighting line. But there can be no organization of the back areas when there are no back areas, as was the case at Gallipoli. There was no backing to the attack, and in the absence of this foundation to the tactical fabric it appeared to General Monro that it was neither fair to commanders and troops to ask them to attack, nor reasonable to anticipate success.

Monro had said in the report that the force required rest and reorganization. He reinforced this statement when giving evidence before the Dardanelles Commission. He told the Commission " that his opinion was strengthened by the state of health of the troops." In the previous month the doctors had reported that 50 per cent. of the men in seven battalions at Anzac had feeble hearts and shortness of breath, that 78 per cent. of these suffered from diarrhoea and 64 per cent. from sores. The corps at Suvla had evacuated over 1,800 sick during the first three days of October. The average net wastage, apart from battle casualties, was 24 per cent. per mensem. The corps commanders, Generals Byng and Davies, reported at the beginning of November

that the men were "incapable of more than twenty-four hours of sustained offensive effort."

There are two statements in Mr. Churchill's *World Crisis* which call for correction and some explanation. One is that General Monro was only six hours on the Peninsula, the other is that he never went beyond the Beaches.

On the evening of his arrival at Mudros harbour on October 27th, a cablegram was handed to him directing him to send, immediately, to the Cabinet his opinion on the desirability of either remaining on the Peninsula or of evacuating it. He therefore asked the Navy to provide him with a destroyer, and soon after dawn on October 28th, he proceeded to inspect the positions, landing at the respective Headquarters of Generals Davis, Byng and Birdwood.

He did not return till nightfall. Walking up from the shore to his Headquarters he said to his Military Secretary, "The Cabinet have asked me for a definite decision on a difficult and vital point on the policy and future destiny of the War within a few hours of my arrival at the scene of action, which is hardly fair or reasonable." He continued, "I have done my best to gather information first hand from the Navy and Army, to understand the position by my personal inspection, and, in addition, I have carefully studied the weather forecast of the coming weeks and months, and the amount of sickness on the Peninsula, which is increasing at an alarming rate."

(The sickness was a kind which led an Australian to describe life on the Peninsula as being between the devil and the W.C.)

After enumerating many other points which had occurred to him he added, "The water supply has to be carried from Alexandria to the Peninsula and there are a thousand and one other difficulties to be faced."

It is obvious, therefore, that the onus of the "quick decision" which others besides Mr. Churchill have criticized, by implication if not directly, rests not on Sir Charles Monro but on the Cabinet, of which Mr. Churchill was a member!

And there exists a photograph of him on the top of Helles cliff.

Later Mr. Churchill remarks that "he never again set foot on the Peninsula during the tenure of his command," which statement is true but does not mention the fact that immediately on his return to Mudros from Egypt he met with the accident to his foot, which is referred to later. But however long he may have stayed on shore and however often he landed, his decision would



not have been different from what it was ; a decision which was confirmed by Lord Kitchener when he too had seen the situation at Gallipoli with his own eyes.

It has been claimed by the chief presenter of this strange and distressful tragedy that all that was needed was one more slight effort, a little more tenacity, and the victory which he had so confidently predicted would have been won.

The will to victory is a fine thing and often a present help in war, but something more is required than mere words in order to win battles. Mr. Churchill had said once before that we should win our way through Gallipoli. He had been very much mistaken. He again said it. Is there any reason to suppose that this time he was less mistaken ? Let us grant for a moment that those troops, capable, as they were, of twenty-four hours' sustained effort only, had gained the Turkish positions,<sup>1</sup> within the limit of that capability, as the result of one last supreme effort, and at what must have been a tremendous cost in casualties.

Victory in itself is nothing ; it is the fruits of victory which count. Would the guns, munitions, transport and rearward services have been present in order to support and maintain the forward movement ? Would those troops have been in a condition to reap the fruits ? We know from Sir Charles Monro's despatches, the statements of the corps commanders and the sick returns that they would not. . . . The field would have been watered in blood, but the harvest would have been barren.

Monro had been told to report on the "military situation," and he had complied. Absence of surprise, accentuated by faulty and neglectful preparation, lack of depth in which to organize a defensive position on which to mount an attack, and the enfeebled state of the troops were all facts which there was no getting away from, and as in his opinion they precluded any prospect of success there was only one reasonable step left to take, and that step was evacuation.

There is a tendency nowadays to belittle the strategic lessons of the past and to assert that the destruction of the enemy hostile forces is no longer an objective of the first importance as it was in our fathers' days and in the old times before them.

Whether the critics are right need not be argued here. The fact remains that if greater attention had been paid by the

<sup>1</sup> It was not merely a question of taking one line of trenches, for behind the first system lay a second, and behind the second there was the Achi Baba position and the fortress of Kilid Bahr.

War Council to this "senile" principle there would have been fewer errors of conception in the direction of the War by the supreme authorities in London.

It was not the capture of Jerusalem, it was Allenby's complete destruction, in the following year, of the Turkish armies which opposed him, that drove Turkey out of the War. It was not the overrunning of the Turkish trenches, but the relentless pursuit, day and night, which brought about the annihilation of the Ottoman forces. The possession of the Turkish positions in Gallipoli would have led nowhere, unless followed immediately by a felling blow on the defenders of the Crescent. The devoted efforts of many weeks had failed to give us those positions, and if Fortune, in extravagant mood, had awarded them to one last effort, our exhausted troops would have gained an empty victory—empty of all save glory.

There is one other factor of importance which served to strengthen General Monro's decision. Early in October German, Austrian and Bulgarian armies had swept over Serbia and opened the way for the transport of heavy artillery and munitions of war to strengthen the Turkish defence. Henceforth every day's delay would favour the enemy rather than us, and with the advent of guns of heavy calibre in the Turkish lines our situation on the beaches would become increasingly untenable.

General Monro had been recalled from command of an army in France in order to report whether evacuation should be undertaken or further endeavours made to defeat the Turks on the Gallipoli Peninsula. He reported in unequivocal terms in favour of evacuation. He stated clearly the military reasons on which he had based his conclusions. One would have thought that his report would have settled the business. One would have imagined that the receipt of the report would have brought the relief from anxiety which a clear-cut decision almost always brings to a cloudy and uncertain condition of the mind. One would have pictured the War Council as saying, "Thank God, we now know definitely what we ought to do. Here is the opinion of our expert, our selected man, our man on the spot. He has given us his opinion and it is a decided opinion, based on undeniable facts. There is only one thing to do, viz. to follow this opinion, and the sooner we commence to act the better for all concerned." That is what we should have thought and imagined and pictured would have happened; and we would have been wrong. The report had an entirely contrary effect; it only increased the gloom and intensified the indecision that pervaded the councils of the War Committee.

What was the cause of this hesitancy now that the military situation had been made so admirably clear to them? It must be attributed to the fact that the War Committee was swayed by considerations other than military. There was Mr. Churchill, the passionate champion of the Gallipoli scheme; there was a small influential band of naval officers who were ardently in favour of it; and there were, as there always must be in such circumstances, certain political factors, of which the principal in this case were (a) the urgency of giving a helping hand to Russia, and (b) the effect which evacuation, with its consequent blow to our prestige, would have throughout the Muhammadan world, as well as in Australia and New Zealand.

It is an axiom that policy and strategy must walk hand-in-hand. When one pulls forward and the other pulls backward, there will be trouble. If the pull is hard enough they will break away from each other and the trouble becomes a catastrophe. In order to avert the catastrophe one may be made to give way to the other. Should strategy be made to give way to policy in war-time there will be chaos and calamity, for the best policy in the world is futile if it ends in a military defeat. Should the policy be made to give way to strategy the results may not be so disastrous, nevertheless there will be expenditure of life, money and energy and all to no purpose.

It is the statesman's business to harmonize the policy and strategy. That is what he is for, and if he fails in this he has failed as much as a defeated general in the field has failed. His failure has often the greater consequences. There is this difference, however, between the defeated general and the defeated statesman. The former rarely receives any further employment; the latter comes up smiling, again and again. In the report of the Dardanelles Commission we read, "As regards Sir Ian Hamilton it is inevitable that the capabilities of a commander in war should be judged by the results he achieves," even though if "these results are disappointing," his failure may be due to causes for which he is "only partially responsible." If the statesman was tested by a like judgment, and made more personally answerable than he is for the results of his policy, it is permissible to think that policy would be directed with greater firmness and wisdom than is sometimes the case.

The first reflection of this indecision appeared in a telegram from Lord Kitchener to Monro, dated November 1st, i.e. the very day after the receipt of the report in London, enquiring whether the corps commanders held the same opinion regarding the advisability of evacuation. To order a man to examine and



BRIDGE OVER THE AISNE, 1914



report on a certain matter, and when you get his report, to ask him whether his subordinates agree, is an intimation that you have not complete confidence in his judgment. And it was all the more remarkable in this case, since General Monro had been especially selected by Lord Kitchener himself to make the report.

In his original instructions to Sir Ian Hamilton Lord Kitchener had written, "Having entered on the project of forcing the Straits, there can be no idea of abandoning the scheme." On November 3rd, he wired to Sir William Birdwood, "I absolutely refuse to sign orders for evacuation, which I think would be the gravest disaster and would condemn a large percentage of our men to death and imprisonment."

His mind being set against evacuation, why had he sent General Monro to report? Whatever may be the answer to this question, the effect as far as General Monro is concerned would be the same. Nothing could have occurred between the time of his departure from London and the submission of his report to shake Lord Kitchener's confidence in him. But the inevitable result of the November 1st telegram would be to shake his confidence in Lord Kitchener.

A man's task is rendered infinitely harder alike if he feels that he has lost his chief's confidence or if he has lost confidence in his chief. But there was one thing which Monro could never lose, and that was an absolute loyalty to those he served. In calling on his three corps commanders to submit their opinions, he begged them "earnestly to give their opinions without paying any heed to his."

General Davies said: "I agree with General Monro."

General Byng said: "I consider evacuation desirable. As regards Suvla, a voluntary and not very costly retirement is feasible at the present time, but it seems possible that with German help to the enemy a compulsory and therefore costly retreat may be necessitated."

General Birdwood said: "I agree with General Monro regarding the grave disadvantages of our position and the extreme difficulty of making any progress. But I consider that the Turks would look upon our evacuation as a complete victory. From Indian experience I fear the result on the Muhammadan world in India, Egypt, Persia. I am, therefore, opposed to evacuation. I am of opinion that, if we leave the Peninsula, it is essential that the whole force must be launched immediately against the Turks elsewhere, and I fail to see where this can be done with confident hope of success. I am adverse to withdrawal which would enable

Turkish forces to proceed to Caucasus or Mesopotamia ; landing elsewhere than in Turkey would not have the same effect. I also fear that the moral effect on our troops of withdrawal would be bad, while the Turkish morale would proportionately rise. Season being so late, and bad weather at hand, I think actual withdrawal fraught with difficulty and danger, as ample time and continuous fine weather is essential. All embarkations must be done at night, and only four or five nights a week can be counted on. Heavy loss might be caused by the advent of any continuous bad weather after withdrawal has been partially carried out."

A man possessing the inexhaustible energy, the large intellect, the political experience, the talent for painting word pictures, the dominating personality of Mr. Churchill must necessarily have a great influence in the congregation of councillors ; and Mr. Churchill was opposed, tooth and nail, to the abandonment of the Dardanelles expedition in any shape or form. He was supported by Admiral Wemyss and Commodore Keyes. These two officers pressed for another attempt on the part of the Navy to force the Straits. Once in possession of the Sea of Marmora, they reasoned, our ships would be able to interrupt the Turkish communications and thereby reduce the Turkish troops to a state of inanition.

The adverse consequences concerning Russia of our withdrawal from Gallipoli could not be left out of account.

Finally, there were grave misgivings regarding the effect which our admitted repulse by the Turks would have on the mind of the Muhammadan world.

Apprehension of Muslim religious sensitiveness has constantly affected the judgment of British Agents and Governors of India, and political agitators have been ready to take advantage of this susceptibility, for the existence of which there does not seem to be any good warrant. Time and again Muhammadan soldiers of the Indian Army have fought against their co-religionists over the frontier and elsewhere and have not exhibited any particular repugnance in so doing. During the Great War the Muhammadan sowar and sepoy neither showed nor expressed reluctance to shooting a Turk or running him through with a lance. Their conversation led one rather to believe that they enjoyed doing these things. The fact is, as borne out by history, Muslim no more minds fighting Muslim than Christian minds fighting Christian. In the larger issue, there was no more ground for assuming that the Muhammadan world would raise the standard of religious war on account of a British set-back at the hands of

the Turks than that the Christian world would do likewise were the situation reversed.<sup>1</sup>

The Councillors took counsel of their fears. They were not alone in this attitude ; Lord Kitchener, Sir John Maxwell commanding the troops in Egypt, Sir Henry McMahon the High Commissioner, Sir William Birdwood and Lord Curzon, all men who had spent a large portion of their lives among Muhammadans in India and Egypt, were obsessed by the same anxiety. Whatever the soundness of the ground on which this apprehension rested, after events proved that all those who doubted were mistaken. Nothing untoward in the Muhammadan world followed on our evacuation.

Although General Monro had been bidden to report on " the military position," he had not been able to leave political considerations entirely out of his calculations, as appears in the concluding paragraph of his report. It is rarely possible to do so when dealing with major military problems.

At the same time, with the simple directness, unclouded by a multitude of inferior issues, which always distinguished his decisions, he gave the political aspect no more weight than was its due. According to him the troops freed by the evacuation of Gallipoli should reassemble in Egypt, where they could obtain the rest, reorganization and training of which they stood so badly in need. There they would be ready, if required, for the defence of Egypt, about whose safety Lord Kitchener and Sir John Maxwell were at this time greatly concerned. In this manner, policy and strategy could walk hand-in-hand.

Should we, however, continue to cling to our end of the Peninsula for fear of upheavals or unrest which our withdrawal would cause in the ranks of Muhammadanism, while the military situation called clearly and urgently for evacuation, policy and strategy would be pulling in opposite directions. Time could not effect a remedy ; delay would only aggravate the disease.

Lord Milner said in the House of Lords, " When I hear that it would be a terrible thing to abandon our adventure because this would have so bad an effect in Egypt and in India, upon our prestige in the East, I cannot help asking myself whether it will not have a worse effect if we persist in that enterprise and it ends in disaster."

It was argued by some of the opponents of evacuation that by

<sup>1</sup> There were one or two regrettable incidents in Mesopotamia which might give colour to the notion that it is trying our Muhammadan soldiers high to pit them against their co-religionists. These isolated cases are attributable to a concatenation of circumstances and their rarity suffices to prove the rule.



continuing our operations in Gallipoli we were at least preventing the Turks from employing the troops that were opposed to us there, in Mesopotamia, against Egypt, or elsewhere. The argument is stultified by the fact that the number of Turkish troops contained by the British was considerably lower than the number of British troops which were contained by the Turks. The Turkish numbers have been estimated at 300,000. The total numbers employed by us on the Gallipoli campaign amounted to 400,000 approximately, besides a large naval force and a quantity of merchant ships taken from other urgent requirements such as food supply. The balance, therefore, was very much in favour of the Turks.

General Monro forwarded the opinions of the corps commanders to Lord Kitchener and at the same time repeated his own in favour of evacuation. He also added that Admiral de Robeck and the corps commanders considered that a loss of thirty to forty per cent. in personnel and material might be incurred in carrying out the operation and that he was "inclined to agree with their estimate."

The receipt of these opinions did not diminish the uncertainty and suspense which possessed the minds of the members comprising the War Committee. Labouring in a sea of uncertainty and buffeted by the waves of contradictory opinions, seeking a course which should free them from their perplexity, they asked Lord Kitchener to visit the scene of action and in so doing guide them towards a decision. Lord Kitchener, therefore, despatched the following telegram to Sir W. Birdwood :

"Very secret.

"You know the report sent in by Monro. I shall come out to you ; am leaving to-morrow night. I have seen Captain Keyes and I believe the Admiralty will agree to making naval attempt to force the passage of the Straits. We must do what we can to assist them, and I think that as soon as our ships are in the Sea of Marmora we should seize the Bulair Isthmus and hold it so as to supply the Navy if the Turks still hold out.

"There will probably be a change in the naval command, Wemyss being appointed in command to carry through the naval part of the work.

"As regards the military command, you would have the whole force and should carefully select your commanders and troops. I would suggest Maude, Fanshawe, Marshall, Peyton, Godley, Cox, leaving others to hold the lines. Please work out

plans for this, or alternative plans as you may think best. We must do it right this time.

"I absolutely refuse to sign orders for evacuation which I think would be the gravest disaster and would condemn a large percentage of our men to death or imprisonment.

"Monro will be appointed to the command of the Salonika force."

Having brushed the report aside, Lord Kitchener proceeded to brush General Monro aside with it.

The reward which General Monro received for reporting "fully and frankly" was removal from the command to which he had been appointed. There was nothing vindictive about Lord Kitchener; he was too big a man for that. He probably desired to have in command at Gallipoli someone whose views coincided more or less with his own preconceived ideas. Consequently General Monro must be cleared out of the way in order to make room for General Birdwood.

But General Birdwood, taking a straight course, urged, in his reply to Lord Kitchener, that Sir Charles Monro should be left in the chief command. Meanwhile he suppressed the portion of the telegram which had reference to his supersession of Sir Charles, a generous and characteristic act.

Returning to General Monro, it had been his intention, after the despatch of his report on the evening of October 31st, to proceed to Egypt on November 2nd in order to confer with General Sir John Maxwell on the matters connected with the defence of Egypt and the Suez Canal. The receipt of Lord Kitchener's telegram asking for the opinion of the corps commanders delayed his departure until November 3rd, on which date he sailed for Alexandria on board H.M.S. *Chatham*, accompanied by his staff.

Having arrived at Alexandria, he went at once by special train to Cairo, which he reached on the evening of November 4th. General Maxwell dined General Monro and his staff that evening at Shepherds Hotel. The dinner was good, the wine sparkled, and Sir Charles, with the burden of the report off his mind, contributed to the meal a full measure of the inimitable gaiety and bonhomie which his friends recognize as one of his most endearing attributes.

After dinner, General Maxwell having dismissed the junior members of the staff from the room imparted to the General the substance of Lord Kitchener's telegram of November 3rd to General Birdwood. Here he heard for the first time that his recommendation for evacuation was diametrically opposed to

Lord Kitchener's views, and that his command was to be reduced and restricted to Salonika, while General Birdwood was to have supreme command of the Gallipoli operations.<sup>1</sup> Shortly after receiving this mortifying intelligence Sir Charles went out on to the verandah, where later a member of his staff found him greatly perturbed—and he had cause. He had been recalled from the command of one of our armies in France, he had been entrusted with a mission carrying with it a tremendous load of responsibility, he had carried out this mission with fearless judgment, and his reward had been first a slap in the face in the call for the opinion of his subordinate commanders, followed by this blow suspiciously near the belt. Vain pride had no place in Sir Charles Monro's composition, but he possessed the honest pride which every man possesses who has faith in himself and in his professional ability and knowledge.

It may be that "the good things of adversity are to be admired." None the less the good things have often a very bitter taste. General Monro was not one, however, to allow the sense of bitterness to overcome the sense of duty. The following morning he showed that radiancy of spirit which invariably infected all those with whom he came in contact. He waited patiently at Cairo the advent of Lord Kitchener. On November 4th, following on the decision that he should himself visit Gallipoli, Lord Kitchener sent a second telegram to General Birdwood, in which he said: "I am coming as arranged and shall be in Alexandria Monday night or Tuesday morning. Shall stay there one day without landing and without my presence being known. After seeing Maxwell and McMahon shall come on to you. . . . The more I look at the problem the less I see my way through, so you had better quietly and secretly work out any scheme for getting the troops off the Peninsula."

On November 3rd Lord Kitchener had expressed unqualified resolve never to assent to the evacuation of Gallipoli; on November 4th, i.e. one day later, he directed General Birdwood to take the first step towards the accomplishment of that operation. What could be the reason for this sudden sag in the absoluteness of his original opinion?<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This information was confirmed in a telegram dated November 4th, from Lord Kitchener to Monro, which ran: "You have been appointed to the command of the Salonika Force. General Birdwood will take over from you the command of the Mediterranean Force. You will take over command at Salonika as soon as possible."

<sup>2</sup> It was on the night 3rd-4th November that Lord Kitchener learnt the Cabinet decision not to accept Commodore Keyes' plan for forcing the Straits, which fact may account in some degree, but could hardly account entirely for this rapid change from unbending resolution to dubiety.

His proposal to seize the Bulair Isthmus, contained in the first telegram to General Birdwood, had not been favourably received by the Admiralty, by General Birdwood, nor by Commodore Keyes, with whom he had held two conversations—on November 3rd and 4th. This of itself would scarcely seem an adequate explanation for such a *volie-face*. Perhaps on further reflection he had begun to think that General Monro's report could not be side-tracked with impunity. After all, Sir Charles Monro was the man whom Lord Kitchener had chosen in order to make the report, and one cannot suppose therefore that it would make no impression whatever, after the tumult of opposition, which it created at first in Lord Kitchener's mind, had been given time to calm down.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Kitchener left England on November 4th. He did not go to Alexandria; he went straight to Mudros, sending word to Sir John Maxwell, Sir Henry McMahon and Sir Charles Monro to join him there. After a somewhat hurried packing up, they embarked with their staffs on H.M.S. *Chatham* and steamed at 8 a.m., November 8th, for Mudros, which they reached on the 9th. Lord Kitchener arrived a few hours later, accompanied by General Horne<sup>2</sup> and his private secretary, Colonel Fitzgerald. That same evening a conference was held at Lord Kitchener's Headquarters on board H.M.S. *Lord Nelson* at which General Birdwood was also present.

That conference must have presented an interesting scene of contrasting personalities and conflicting ideas; Sir John Maxwell and Sir Henry McMahon fearful for the safety of Egypt and overawed by the *ignis fatuus* of Muhammadan sentiment; General Birdwood affected by a like spectre of inflamed Muhammadanism while more than doubtful of the possibilities of success in Gallipoli; Lord Kitchener repugnant at the thought of evacuation, concerned like General Maxwell, for the safety of Egypt, "unable to see his way through" and yet only too glad to be persuaded by the anti-evacuation party if their arguments should prove sufficiently strong; Sir Charles Monro standing alone for evacuation, immediate and complete, stock, lock and barrel. The situation was such as to demand the exercise of the full powers of a strong mind fortified by faith in its own judgment.

"Compromise" would have been the resource of a weaker man. There is a time to compromise and a time not to compromise.

<sup>1</sup> It was rumoured that Lord Kitchener told a high official that he had come out "to break that damned fellow Monro, who is nothing more or less than a political general." The reply to which remark was "I do not think Monro knows three politicians by sight."

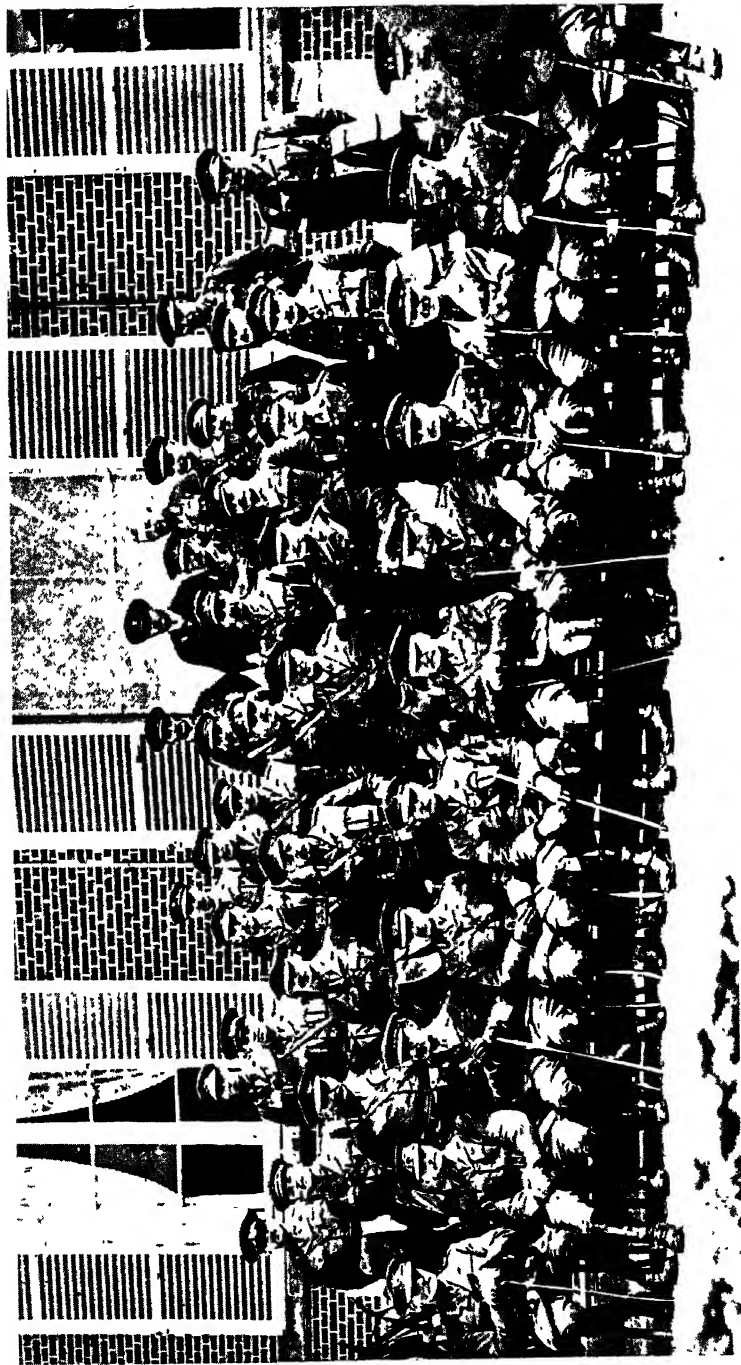
<sup>2</sup> Afterwards General Lord Horne, G.C.B.

There are occasions when a refusal to compromise is mere obstinacy, and to know when to compromise and when not to do so is strength and wisdom combined. There is the compromise "that still breaks the pate of faith . . . the bias of the world," and there is the so-called compromise which is often nothing else than the outcome of an honest endeavour to see the other side of the question or to regard it from another position than that first occupied by oneself.

Now we have seen from his report that General Monro had deliberated on the effect evacuation might have on the Muhammadan world and had given due thought to the question of the defence of Egypt. But it was clear as noonday to him that when the military situation was void of any hope of a successful issue a continuation of the operations could, in the long run, have only one result, viz. an aggravation of those very menaces which the opponents of evacuation most feared.

On the morning of November 11th heavy seas were running and Monro was one of the few of those called to the conference on Lord Kitchener's ship who found it possible to attend. The picket boat which was to convey Monro back to his Headquarters could only be brought alongside with difficulty. As he was stepping into the boat a wave lifted it suddenly, struck his foot with great force and seriously injured his ankle. He was taken to the yacht *Liberty*, the Headquarters of Sir James Porter, the naval director of Medical Services, and was carried on deck, where Sir James Porter and Sir Courthauld Thomson, the Chief Commissioner of the British Red Cross and Order of St. John, did all that was possible to relieve the pain and make him comfortable.

Arrangements were being made to prepare a cabin for him when it was brought to notice that if he remained on board the *Liberty*, which displayed the Red Cross flag and was painted white in order to show that it was a Red Cross ship, he could not retain executive command. Sir Charles Monro, although in great pain, instantly insisted on being carried down the gangway and on to the picket boat again, an operation which was only accomplished with great difficulty. He was conveyed to the *Aragon* and placed in the cabin which Sir Courthauld Thomson gave up to him. The physical suffering and restriction of movement which he had to endure during these days of mental strain and anxiety made the burden of responsibility harder to bear than ever. The injury left a permanent mark and Sir Charles was never able afterwards to walk any distance or over rough ground in comfort.



ARMY COMMANDER, CORPS AND DIVISIONAL COMMANDERS, AND CHIEF STAFF OFFICERS  
OF THE THIRD ARMY, 1915

*Sitting:* MAJ.-GEN. COOKSON, MAJ.-GEN. FANSHAWE, MAJ.-GEN. KAVANAGH, MAJ.-GEN. MAXSE, MAJ.-GEN. SNOW, SIR CHARLES MONRO,  
MAJ.-GEN. RIMINGTON, MAJ.-GEN. WILSON, MAJ.-GEN. BARROW, MAJ.-GEN. COUNT GIECHEN, MAJ.-GEN. LORD CAVAN.  
*Standing (front row):* BRIG.-GEN. HIBBERT, MAJ.-GEN. MONTGOMERY, MAJ.-GEN. LYNDEN BELL, MAJ.-GEN. CAMPBELL,  
MAJ.-GEN. CAPPEL, BRIG.-GEN. LYON.



He was only half-way up the rickety ladder of military reputation and had still a long way to go to reach the top. His career was still in the making; nevertheless he gave no thought to himself, and stood firm and unyielding against the weight of eminent opinion that opposed him.

The conference, commenced on the evening of November 9th, was continued on the 10th and 11th. November 12th, 13th and 14th were spent by Lord Kitchener in inspecting the positions at Helles, Anzac and Suvla. On November 15th he sent the following telegram to the Prime Minister, and which, on account of its remarkable interest, it is necessary to quote in full. It constitutes a complete vindication of General Monro's judgment. It is a tacit witness to the want of foresight, the miscomputations and the disregard of former lessons which illustrated the conception and initiation of the Dardanelles project, and which have already been alluded to in these pages. It was as follows:

"To gain what we hold has been a most remarkable feat of arms. The country is much more difficult than I imagined and the Turkish positions at Achi Baba and Kilid Bahr are natural fortresses of the most formidable nature, which, if not taken by surprise at first, could be held against very serious attack by larger forces than have been engaged, even if these forces had proper lines of communication to support them. This latter want is the main difficulty in carrying out successful operations on the Peninsula.

"The landings are precarious and often impossible through rough sea and want of harbours, and the enemy's positions are peculiarly suitable for making our communications more dangerous and difficult. The base at Mudros is too far detached from our forces in the field, and the proper co-ordination of the administrative services of a line of communications is prevented by distance and sea voyages dependable on the weather.

"This state of things, in my judgment, is the main cause of our troops not having been able to do better, and to attain really strategic points on the Peninsula, which would have turned Kilid Bahr, and unless this were done I do not consider that the fleet ever could have passed the Straits.

"Everyone has done wonders, both on sea and land, when the natural difficulties that have had to be surmounted are considered. Our present positions, in my opinion, can be held against the Turks even if they receive increased ammunition.

"The trenches have been well dug and bomb-proof covering has been afforded for the men; supplies and water are on shore, and officers and men are confident that they can hold out against



the Turks but they are somewhat depressed at not being able to get through.

"I consider, however, the lines are not deep enough if Germany sent a German force to attack, to allow of proper arrangements for supports, and if the front line trenches were taken, these difficulties would increase. I consider that advances from our present positions are very difficult, particularly from Helles and Anzac. Suvla gives some opportunity for improving our positions, but it seems very doubtful whether this would enable us to push through.

"About 125,000 Turks are immobilized by our occupation of the Peninsula, and they are caused considerable loss, and, until the recent German operations in Serbia opened communications with Turkey and changed the situation, practically the whole Turkish army had to be held in readiness to defend the capital if we succeeded on the Peninsula.

"In present circumstances the *raison d'être* of our forces on the Gallipoli peninsula is no longer as important as it has been hitherto, and if another position in the neighbourhood of Alexandretta were occupied, where Turkish movements eastward could be effectively stopped, the realization of the German objective against Egypt and the East would be prevented.

"Careful and secret preparations for the evacuation of the Peninsula are being made. If undertaken it would be an operation of extreme military difficulty and danger; but I have hopes that, given time and weather, which may be expected to be suitable until about the end of December, the troops will carry out this task with less loss than was previously estimated. My reason for this is that the distance they had to go to embark, and the contraction of the lines of defence to be held by a smaller force, gives them a better chance than I thought previously.

"The Admiral and Generals Monro and Birdwood, to whom I have read the above, all agree."

Almost to the end of his stay at Gallipoli, Lord Kitchener's attitude towards General Monro was slighting to a degree. He ignored him as much as was possible. He did on one occasion, invite Sir Charles to dinner. Sir Charles enquired whether the invitation was an official or a private one, and on being informed that it was private, declined it. Lord Kitchener seems to have been impressed by this and other incidents, which went to show him that Sir Charles was a man of a fearless and independent character.

Later on, when General Monro was in command of the First Army in France, Lord Kitchener was a welcome visitor at the Army Commander's table; and it was evident to the senior staff

officers who were present on these occasions that the War Minister had the highest regard for the man whom he had so completely misjudged a few months previously.

Mr. Churchill, in his book *The World Crisis* 1915, makes several remarks which can only be taken as strictures on the professional character of Monro. He says, "He (Monro) belonged to that school whose supreme conception of Great War strategy was 'killing Germans.' Anything that killed Germans was right, anything that did not kill Germans was useless, even if it made other people kill them, and kill more of them, or terminated their power to kill us. To such minds the capture of Constantinople was an idle trophy, and the destruction of Turkey as a military factor, or the rallying of the Balkan States to the Allies, mere politics, which every military man should hold in proper scorn."

It is perfectly true that a good many of our soldiers did think that "killing Germans" was right and did, therefore, endeavour to kill Germans. General Monro must be numbered amongst them. Indeed, it is difficult to see how the War could have been won without "killing Germans," and, therefore, the soldier hardly merits censure for including this in his doctrine. But it is at least open to question whether there exists or ever did exist a school amongst educated soldiers whose only conception of strategy went no further than killing Germans. Whether there was or not, Sir Charles Monro emphatically did not belong to it.

One is curious to know from what source Mr. Churchill obtained the idea of Sir Charles Monro's military character, an idea which, to anyone personally acquainted with Sir Charles, must seem ludicrously inaccurate.

Further, Mr. Churchill remarks that "according to his (Monro's) own statements he contemplated, in addition to the ruin of the whole enterprise, a loss of from thirty to forty per cent. of the army." What Monro actually did say was that, "Admiral de Robeck and his corps commanders thought a loss of thirty to forty per cent. in personnel and material might be incurred and that he was inclined to agree with their estimate." (Dardanelles Commission Report.)

It will be, of course, plain to everyone that an obstinate persistence in an enterprise which was devoid of any hope of ultimate success could merely lead to a postponement of its inevitable abandonment, together with a loss rising relatively according to the length of the delay from thirty per cent. to sixty per cent., eighty per cent. or even a hundred per cent.

Mr. Churchill goes on to repeat in full Lord Kitchener's telegram of November 3rd, 1915, to General Birdwood quoted on page 76

which ends with the words: "I absolutely refuse to sign orders for evacuation. . . . Monro will be appointed to the Salonika command," and he exclaims, "Here was the true Kitchener. Here in this flaming telegram . . . was the man the British Empire believed him to be, in whom millions set their faith—resolute, self-reliant, creative, lion-hearted."

Unfortunately, the critic has committed the singular mistake of criticizing the picture when it is only half completed, for he continues: "Unhappily the next day . . . 'I am coming as arranged, the more I look at the problem the less I see my way through, so you had better work out any schemes for getting the troops off the Peninsula.'"

It is submitted that this was not the true Kitchener. When we look into the finished picture of this great soldier, boastingly donning his armour only to doff it the very next day, we see no indication of that length of vision and constancy of spirit which we should expect to find in a portrait of the true Kitchener. What the picture does reveal to us is the first uneasy stirrings in Lord Kitchener's mind that perhaps the Dardanelles Expedition was a ghastly mistake.

This telegram is of peculiar interest, not only on account of its bearing on the Gallipoli problem, but also because it is a human document revealing a mind torn between an intense reluctance to admit defeat and a realization that no other alternative existed. It contains no direct recommendation for evacuation and at the same time the fact that evacuation is signified is unmistakable.

The report may be conveniently summarized as follows:

- (a) The country was much more difficult and the Turkish defences more formidable than Lord Kitchener had imagined.
- (b) The opportunity for surprise having been surrendered, the Turkish defences were impregnable to the available British forces.
- (c) The lines of communication were insecure on account of the precarious nature of the landing-places.
- (d) The base at Mudros was too far from the scene of conflict.
- (e) The British lines lacked depth.
- (f) In default of our troops being able to secure strategical (tactical?) positions which would have turned Kilid Bahr, the fleet could not pass the Straits.
- (g) Our troops could maintain their present positions against the Turks, but would be unable to do so against German reinforcements.
- (h) The occupation of another position in the neighbourhood of Alexandretta would secure Egypt and the East.

(i) Preparations were being made for the evacuation of the Peninsula.

One perceives from this recapitulation that the enterprise was a much more difficult operation tactically than Lord Kitchener had previously visualized; and there is a tacit admission of the invidious results which followed on the absence of the element of surprise. The other contributory forces to our non-success are enumerated.

The reference to our ability to hold on to our end of the Peninsula against the Turks without an adequate reason given for adopting such a course are indications of the feeling of aversion with which Lord Kitchener regarded evacuation. The proposal for a landing in the vicinity of Alexandretta suggests the concern which existed for the safety of Egypt. Finally, the preparations for evacuation are evidence that the abandonment of the enterprise was the uppermost thought in Lord Kitchener's mind at the moment of sending off the telegram.

Compared with the landing in Egypt in 1882, to which allusion has already been made, the report taken item by item is damning evidence of the disregard shown for all previous lessons and experiences. In conclusion, Lord Kitchener's telegram of November 3rd to the Prime Minister is, by itself, an absolute vindication in every particular of the recommendation made by General Monro on October 29th, 1915.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The reason that we were containing the bulk of the Turkish Army is hardly an adequate one, for we employed actually more men on the Peninsula than the Turks did, not to mention ships-of-war and merchant vessels—all at a huge cost with great difficulties of maintenance through the winter months.

## CHAPTER V

Kitchener recommends evacuation of Suvla and Anzac and retention of Helles. Comments. General Staff and War Committee advise evacuation of whole Peninsula. Cabinet still hesitate. Lord Curzon's fears. The November gale. Monro appeals for early decision. Kitchener wavers. Monro remains firm. Bonar Law's memorandum. Salonika question forces a decision. Comments. Monro's courage. Admiral Wemyss opposes evacuation. Admiralty reply. A general fights on two fronts. General Monro discomfits Mr. Churchill. A conflict of personalities.

**A**FTER the despatch of his report to the Prime Minister on November 15th, Lord Kitchener, accompanied by General Monro and their respective staffs, had proceeded to view the situation at Salonika. They returned to Mudros on November 19th, and on the evening of that day a telegram was received, from which Lord Kitchener learnt that his proposal to send an expedition to Ayas Bay was not accepted by Government and in which the Prime Minister asked for his "considered opinion as to the evacuation of the Peninsula in whole or in part."

On November 22nd Lord Kitchener replied to the effect that while our offensive had up to the present held up the Turkish army, German assistance was now practically available (as a result of the conquest of Serbia), that this assistance would make our positions untenable and that evacuation therefore seemed inevitable. He therefore recommended that the evacuation of Suvla and Anzac should be proceeded with, while Helles should be held for the present as its retention would enable the Navy to maintain the advantages gained, still threaten the seizure of the Straits and give greater facilities for the evacuation of Suvla and Anzac. (Dardanelles Commission Report.)

In this second report of Lord Kitchener, as in the first, one senses a flavour of justification for the expedition, which, however, only serves to emphasize its failure. The object of a military offensive is to break through, crush or otherwise defeat the enemy, and its only other use is to hold the enemy in his positions as a secondary operation whilst the main attack proceeds elsewhere. In the case of Gallipoli the object of the expedition was certainly not to hold the Turk in his trenches, it was exactly the opposite and tremendous sacrifices had been made to drive

him out of them. Still less is the offensive successful when the enemy "holds up" more of the attackers than these "hold up" of the enemy, as was the case in Gallipoli.

Again, beyond occupying the "fringe" of the seashore, it is difficult to see what the advantages were that we had gained, whereas it would not be difficult to enumerate several of the disadvantages. And a threat to the Straits when three-fourths of our troops had been withdrawn would be hardly likely to trouble much the enemy who had hitherto succeeded in resisting the full weight of our attacks.

They were always in a position, as General Monro had already pointed out, "to hold us in front with a small force and prosecute their designs on Baghdad, on Egypt or on both."

Mr. Churchill, when speaking of Sir Charles Monro in connection with his "evacuation" despatch, said: "He came, he saw, he—capitulated." Presumably, since Lord Kitchener, following in General Monro's footsteps, had come to the same conclusion and made the same recommendation as Sir Charles, Mr. Churchill's paraphrase may be taken as applying equally to Lord Kitchener.

On November 22nd the General Staff recorded its opinion in favour of evacuation. On November 23rd the War Committee advised the evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula "on military grounds notwithstanding the grave political disadvantages which may result from the decision"; they also disagreed with the proposal to retain Cape Helles, the naval advantages to be gained by this course not being commensurate with the military disadvantages involved.

The Cabinet had now before them the recommendations of General Monro, Lord Kitchener, the General Staff and the War Committee, a consensus of opinion which would seem to leave no possible excuse for further hesitation on the part of the Government in giving the order for evacuation to be undertaken without delay. But no, there was more talking to be done; Lord Curzon had not yet had his say. He and several of his colleagues, "anxious at least that the opposite side should be heard, and fearful of a decision fraught with such fearful possibilities, pleaded for a few hours consideration." He proceeded to write two lengthy memoranda, one of which appeared on November 25th and one on November 30th, in which he presented the case against evacuation.

"The fearful possibilities" which alarmed Lord Curzon were, for the most part, a chimera of his own creation. He was affected by the same "insubstantial vision" of Muhammadan ferment which had so wrought on the minds of Lord Kitchener, Sir John

Maxwell and others, and also by a lurid picture of the disaster which would, in his opinion, attend the operation of withdrawal. He saw in the proposed evacuation, "a melancholy picture of chaos and death."

The "few hours" consideration were, in point of fact, not fewer than one hundred and twenty hours, and every one of these hours Death was taking further toll of gallant men in Gallipoli, while his companion, Sorrow, crossed the threshold of many a stricken British home; and General Monro sat helpless at Mudros, watching the canker of Delay playing to the call of Mortality.

On November 27th a furious gale lasting for twenty-four hours swept over Gallipoli, and the torrential rain, pouring through the Suvla trenches, drowned two hundred and eighty men. The gale was followed by an icy blizzard which froze many men to death as they stood at their posts. There were sixteen thousand cases of frost-bite and sufferers from exposure. This sombre warning of approaching winter occurred on those same days that found Lord Curzon busy penning his two memoranda against the policy of evacuation.

On December 1st General Monro sent a telegram to Lord Kitchener in which, after appealing for an early decision, he continued . . .

"There is, however, much to be done, and late season makes time a matter of great urgency. Detailed plans approach completion, but intricate arrangements have still to be made with regard to collection and clearing of shipping, distribution of small craft, embarkation and disposition of troops and material, accommodation on islands, disposal of reinforcements, etc., to say nothing of tactical arrangements.

"Experience of recent storms indicates that there is no time to lose. General Birdwood telegraphed yesterday that if evacuation is to be made possible it is essential to take advantage of every fine day from now. If decision cannot be reached very shortly it may be equivalent to deciding against evacuation."

Lord Kitchener returned to England, having left Mudros on November 24th. Again, it seems, did his mind become weakened and his true vision become dimmed by the copious draughts of verbiage which were administered to him in the Council Chamber. After seeing with his own eyes, he had declared that evacuation was inevitable. He was no longer convinced of this inevitableness. He wired to General Monro on December 2nd:

"The Cabinet has been considering the Gallipoli situation all to-day. Owing to the political consequences there is a strong



SIR CHARLES WITH LADY MONRO LEAVING THE WAR OFFICE  
AFTER APPOINTMENT TO GALLIPOLI COMMAND





feeling against evacuation, even of a partial character. It is the general opinion that we should retain Cape Helles.

“ If the Salonika troops are placed at your disposal up to four divisions for an offensive operation to improve the position at Suvla, could such operations be carried out in time with a view to making Suvla retainable by obtaining higher positions and greater depth? The Navy will also take the offensive in co-operation.”

Sir Charles Monro remained firm. In a way he was more fortunate than Lord Kitchener. He was too far away to be troubled by the tumult of tongues that afflicted the War Minister. He had made his decision and by that he would abide, even though his reputation be at stake and his future in jeopardy.

On December 3rd he telegraphed his reply as follows :

“ I fully recognize the complexity of the situation which has arisen. I do not, however, think that the proposal to employ four fresh divisions in order to gain a more secure position at Suvla can be regarded as an operation offering a reasonable chance of success. We cannot expect the element of surprise which is so essential to make up for the disadvantages of the position under which we labour. The Salonika divisions could not be ready for active operations on the Peninsula before storm weather sets in. . . .

“ In respect of naval co-operation, the character of the terrain on the Peninsula is such that naval guns cannot search the Turkish positions. The fire of the howitzers would be needed to do so effectively. The many deep ravines and gullies are very favourable for the concealment and protection of the Turkish reserves, and for their rapid transference in case of bombardment. Nor do I think the supply of the Turks on the Peninsula by the two lines of supply available to them could be prevented by naval action.”

On December 4th Mr. Bonar Law had come forward with a reply to Lord Curzon's two memoranda in which he summed up the situation with admirable lucidity. He said, “ So far I have considered the question from a military point of view, and my conclusions may be disputed, but there is another aspect of it which is not military and which is not open to dispute. Recognizing the seriousness of the position at the Dardanelles, the Government decided to send a military expert to report on the question of evacuation. For this purpose Sir Charles Monro was chosen. On October 31st he reported in the strongest possible terms in favour of evacuation. He sent us also the opinions of three of the generals on the spot—Generals Byng,

Birdwood and Davies. Of these three, General Birdwood alone was opposed to evacuation, but the reasons given by him for his opposition were entirely political, and he agreed with General Monro regarding the 'great disadvantages of our position and extreme difficulty of making any progress.' Afterwards he concurred in a telegram sent by Lord Kitchener on November 22nd which contained these words: 'Our offensive on the Peninsula has, up to the present, held up the Turkish army, but with German assistance, which is now practically available, our positions there cannot be maintained, and evacuation seems inevitable.' Not satisfied with General Monro's report the Government decided to send Lord Kitchener. In a telegram sent from Paris, on his way, Lord Kitchener showed clearly that he was entirely opposed to evacuation, and he has since told us that he held that view when he started for the Dardanelles. The actual examination of the situation on the spot, however, changed his opinion, and he telegraphed to the Prime Minister in favour of evacuation in words which I have just quoted. We also consulted our General Staff on the subject. They gave us an opinion as definite as that of the other generals in favour of evacuation. It is the fact, therefore, that every military authority, without a single exception, whom we have consulted, has reported in favour of evacuation.

"But this is not all. Some time ago the Cabinet unanimously came to the conclusion that the war could not be carried on by a body so large as the Cabinet. A War Committee was, therefore, appointed. The views of the military authorities came before this Committee, two of whose members, the Prime Minister and the First Lord of the Admiralty, were opposed in the strongest possible way to evacuation; yet this Committee reported unanimously in favour of acting upon the advice of our military advisers. Their recommendation was brought before the Cabinet, with the result that on a matter in regard to which delay must be dangerous and may be fatal, no decision had been reached.

"I hope that my colleagues will agree with me that the war cannot be carried on to a successful issue by methods such as these."

In the meantime the Cabinet, suffering from the same cause which usually afflicts councils of war and other deliberating bodies when considering problems of strategy, turned and laboured in the pangs of divided opinions while unable to bring a decision to birth. This state of indecision was greatly aggravated by the persistence with which Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss, who now commanded the naval forces at Gallipoli, and Commodore Keyes,

continued to urge a renewal of the efforts to force the Dardanelles. There is no knowing how long the Cabinet would have continued in this lamentable state when fortunately the Salonika question forced an issue.

The gaze of the French Government was fixed on Salonika; the gaze of the British Government shifted between Salonika and Gallipoli. An allied council held in Paris on December 5th, and attended by Asquith, Balfour and Briand, arrived at no decision. A British and French military conference held the next day was unanimously in favour of the Salonika project and the abandonment of the Dardanelles Expedition. This military conference appears to have made up the British Government's mind, a thing it was unable to do for itself. On December 7th the Government decided to evacuate Suvla and Anzac and to retain Helles. The Dardanelles Commission's comment on this resolve is: "We think that after the advice of Sir Charles Monro had been confirmed by Lord Kitchener the decision to evacuate should have been taken at once."

It had taken the Government thirty-seven days, dating from General Monro's evacuation report, to come to this decision. It was an exhibition of vacillation and hesitation almost without parallel in military history. Every loss may be made good in war except the loss of time. Thirty-seven priceless days had been elaborately thrown on Time's waste heap, from which there is no recovery. The responsibility for the deplorable delay must primarily rest on Mr. Churchill who, on his own showing, was throughout the most ardent promoter and supporter of the expedition.

There are some people who become so enamoured of an idea, especially if it be one of their own conception, that they lose sight of its object, viz. its application to practice. Their love of their idea renders them deaf to all practical considerations. There are none so deaf as those who refuse to hear.

Mr. Churchill, in a memorandum dealing with the subject of evacuation and circulated to the Cabinet on October 15th, said, "Even withdrawals and capitulations if they are necessary, should not be flinched from. But there would be enduring shame in impeding a decision, in hampering military action when it is decided on. . . . The soldiers who are ordered to their deaths have a right to a plan as well as a cause."

No words could be truer and yet, later, the Cabinet, of which Mr. Churchill was a member, did flinch from the withdrawal and wavered interminably before deciding on the plan to which the "soldiers ordered to their deaths" had a right.

History will give the credit for the termination of the Dardanelles adventure with its accompanying sacrifice of life, ships and treasure, primarily to Sir Charles Monro. History will applaud the sureness and celerity with which he appreciated the situation, the clearness and conciseness with which he interpreted his appreciation into words, the inflexibility with which he adhered to his opinion, once given. He was well aware that his advice was unpalatable to some of those in high authority and who were in a position to affect his career adversely. Needless to say, such knowledge could have no influence on his judgment, but it would not tend to lighten the load of responsibility which was laid upon him. "Responsibility," says St. Vincent, "is the test of a man's courage." Judged by this test, Monro showed a courage that was superb.

The decision of the Cabinet was conveyed to Monro and to Vice-Admiral Wemyss commanding the naval forces at Gallipoli, by wire on December 8th. Admiral Wemyss was not content. He had throughout been one of Mr. Churchill's staunchest supporters of the Dardanelles policy. He sent a long telegram to the First Lord of the Admiralty in which he protested against evacuation and pleaded for a further attempt to force the Straits.

The First Lord, Lord Balfour, replied on December 10th to the effect that the Admiralty were not prepared to question the decision of the Government in view of the individual and combined appreciations of the responsible generals. Sir Henry Jackson, the First Sea Lord, also sent a telegram to Admiral Wemyss in which he said the military authorities were clear that Suvla and Anzac could not be held against increased artillery fire, whilst the Admiralty considered the naval arguments against forcing the Straits were overwhelming.

Henceforth the voices of opposition to the evacuation were silent and attention of all concerned was focused on the problem of the withdrawal of the troops from the Peninsula.

In spite of divergent views, the loyal spirit of co-operation which existed between the naval and military Commanders-in-Chief, as indeed between all ranks of the two services, was never for a moment weakened. This happy unity threw a bright spot on the gloomy stage where the tragedy was played. Vice-Admiral Wemyss in a letter to Sir Charles Monro, dated H.M.S. *The Lord Nelson*, writes: "I am extremely sorry that our views should be so divergent. However, that can make no difference to our hearty co-operation in whatever may be ordained by the powers at home, and I am delighted to think that at any rate we know where we are and that my ideas have not been hidden from you."

In war a general, unless he be absolute, like Frederick or Napoleon, has usually to fight on two fronts, one before and one behind. Before him stands the enemy; behind him stands his own Government swayed by a thousand considerations of political expediency, fears and apprehensions and the inconstant decisions which emerge from half-baked notions of strategy. The general engages in the frontal fight with weapons he understands and in the use of which he has been trained; he engages in the rearward fight with weapons with which he is generally unfamiliar and rarely expert. He often has to guide, persuade or shepherd his Government into the path of action which he knows is the only one which leads to success, and in doing so he often has to combat those who are opposed to his ideas and who are far more skilful than he in wielding the weapons of pen and speech. In spite of the strain and difficulties which are thus imposed on him, the general has no call to cavil at the situation. It is the natural outcome of a system of Government which, however well-suited for modern civilized states, is, being human, not free from defects.

Mr. Churchill said of Sir Charles Monro, in respect of the enemy in front of him, "he came, he saw—he capitulated." Sir Charles, with more regard to philological exactitude, might have exclaimed, in respect of the antagonism behind him—"I came, I saw—I conquered." He had conquered the opposition to evacuation, and in so doing he had discomfited Mr. Churchill.

The question of the Gallipoli campaign, whether it should be renounced or continued, depended mainly for its answer on the conflicting personalities of Sir Charles Monro and Mr. Churchill.

The parts taken in the contest by Lord Fisher and Lord Kitchener were indeterminate. Had General Monro shown any sort of favour for it there can be no doubt that the War Council and Cabinet would have plumped unhesitatingly for its continuation. As it was, by virtue of the advice which he tendered, the unequivocal directness with which it was expressed and the firmness with which it was maintained, he was brought into opposition with Mr. Churchill, the prime mover and the vehement and determined advocate of the Dardanelles project.

In controversial questions, whether of government, business or the myriad matters which form the subject of discussion at the council and committee meetings which play so large a part in the administration of the present day civil affairs, the decision to be made frequently resolves itself into a battle between two strong personalities. An interesting study in contrasts is thus often presented to the student of human nature.

We have here on the one hand, Sir Charles whose character we may liken to the simple, strong and impressive aspect of the Norman architecture; and on the other hand, Mr. Churchill, formed in the likeness of the flamboyant period of the Gothic style. The one type represents solid, clear and unadorned unchangeableness, the other represents brilliant and complicated variety. The charm of one rests in its simple and harmonious strength which needs no other adornment; the charm of the other lies in its soaring and decorative splendour. Alike in the admiration which they invoke in us, they are not alike in the sense of peace and confidence which they inspire in us.

## CHAPTER VI

Salonika. Ostensible reasons for retaining Helles. Monro's views. General Staff memorandum. Cabinet gives consent to evacuation of Helles. German opinions. Monro's general plan for evacuation. The time factor. Suvla and Anzac evacuated. Cabinet looks both ways at same time. Monro's ideas on evacuation of Helles. Peninsula completely evacuated. Monro's praise of others. Mr. Asquith announces accomplishment of the evacuation. Opinions regarding possibility of success if offensive resumed with accession of fresh troops. Losses sustained during re-embarkation. Comments. Monro leaves Egypt. Incident during voyage to England.

**I**T will be remembered that General Monro's command comprised all the British forces east of Malta, excluding Egypt, and therefore included the Salonika front. He was at Salonika, called thither by the serious nature of the situation, when he received news of the Government's decision to withdraw from Suvla and Anzac.

The 10th Division under General Mahon had recently moved into occupation of the line east of Strumnitza, while the Germans and Bulgarians were concentrating in the Strumnitza Valley. British reinforcements were arriving at Salonika, but owing to the bad state of the communications, transport and other difficulties, there was no prospect of their being able to reinforce Mahon's line in time to meet an attack. General Monro saw the imperative necessity of holding back the enemy until the reinforcing divisions should have the time to complete their debarkation. At the same time he impressed on General Sarrail, commanding the French troops, the urgency of an immediate withdrawal from Serbia, as a defeat of the British would result in the cutting of the French line of retirement.

The Bulgarians attacked the 10th Division with a superiority in numbers of three or four to one. The 10th Division putting up a stubborn resistance throughout the fight, which lasted for three days, retired slowly to positions covering Salonika. It lost 1,800 men and eight guns and inflicted very severe losses on the Bulgars. The situation at one time was so serious that the possibility of having to carry out a double and simultaneous embarkation, at Gallipoli and at Salonika, had to be faced. Fortunately the Bulgars were brought to a standstill and the



British were able to consolidate their hold on Salonika. General Monro reported that the troops, who had already suffered considerably from cold in the highlands of Macedonia, had conducted themselves very creditably in withdrawing from a difficult position.

Sir Charles was still detained, after the termination of this operation, in order to take part in negotiations which concerned the relations between the Greeks and the French and which had for their object the prevention of a rupture with the former Power. It was not, therefore, until December 12th, that he was able to return to Mudros. He had already, on December 8th, telegraphed to General Birdwood instructions to proceed with the preparations for evacuation.

From now onwards the preparations for the evacuation of Suvla and Anzac were rapidly carried forward. Helles was to be retained. The cause of this decision to cling on to the end of the Peninsula may be looked for in the advocacy of the sailors. The actual reason given was that by holding on to Helles we should be in a position to renew attack, based on another plan, at some future date, should the Government so decide.

This argument is unconvincing. There is no worse way in war of utilizing one's military forces than not to use them ; to keep them locked up on an off-chance that they may perhaps be required for some speculative purpose at some indeterminate date. Anyhow, neither Sir Charles Monro nor the General Staff were convinced. On December 20th Sir Charles sent a telegram to Lord Kitchener in which he pressed for the evacuation of Helles for the reason that "it would greatly facilitate the reorganization of the Dardanelles army, would lead immediately to reduced expenditure and would liberate a large quantity of freight," and he went on to say that the army "when rested and reorganized would constitute a valuable asset in a central position, ready to strike either in France or wherever demanded by the situation." On December 22nd the General Staff came forward with a memorandum in which they said :

"The arrival of gun ammunition and of fresh guns to help the enemy will, moreover, greatly add to the difficulties in the way of holding on to Helles at all. Not only have munitions arrived from Germany, but artillery which had been previously opposed to Suvla and Anzac will be moved to act against our forces cooped up in the thoroughly bad position they now occupy at the southern end of the Peninsula. Wastage, heavy before, will become greater. The troops, furthermore, are perfectly well aware that the Dardanelles undertaking has definitely failed, and, realizing that they have no hope of advancing or of causing

the enemy any serious injury, will become dispirited. There will be serious risk that the enemy will make a successful attack, and may, in the circumstances, cause us a disaster.

"The necessity of concentration of effort, if this war is to be brought to a successful conclusion, has been drawn attention to in recent papers prepared by the General Staff, and there is no object in labouring this point afresh; retention of Helles means dispersion, not concentration of effort." The General Staff, therefore, "recommend that the Gallipoli Peninsula should be entirely evacuated, and with the least possible delay."

General Sir William Robertson had by this time taken up the appointment of C.I.G.S., and we see in this memorandum evidence of the clear logical mind and firm grasp of essentials which are characteristic of that distinguished soldier.

These combined opinions finally settled the question. On December 23rd the War Committee decided on the evacuation of Cape Helles, and four days later the Cabinet gave its tardy consent. Fifty-seven days had elapsed since Monro had telegraphed his evacuation despatch on October 31st!

In order to support his contention that the Gallipoli adventure should never have been abandoned, Mr. Churchill in *The World Crisis* quotes Count Metternich, German Ambassador at Constantinople during the War, as saying later, "If you had only known what the state of the Turkish army (on the Peninsula) was, it would have gone hard with us."

It is always wise in war to endeavour to see the situation from the enemy's point of view, and it is always interesting to do so when the war is over; and it is as well, for this purpose, to consult the best authorities. It will generally be admitted that the eminent soldier commanding on the spot is a better authority on the point in question than the German Ambassador at Constantinople. Marshal Liman von Sanders has stated that he "entirely agreed with the wisdom of the British decision to evacuate the Peninsula."

It had all along been apparent to General Monro that the evacuation of the Peninsula, whether voluntary or forced, and however much delayed, would have to be undertaken eventually. Consequently the measures to be adopted for carrying out the embarkation had been occupying his mind ever since he had penned his first despatch. Without waiting, therefore, for the Government's final decision he directed General Birdwood in the latter end of November to set about the preparation of a detailed scheme for the withdrawal. The general idea on which the scheme was to be based is given in his despatch of March 6th, 1916, where he writes:

" I had in broad outline contemplated soon after my arrival on the Peninsula that an evacuation could be best conducted by subdivision into three stages.

" The first, during which all troops, animals and supplies not required for a long campaign should be withdrawn.

" The second, to comprise the evacuation of all men, guns, animals and stores not required for defence during a period when the conditions of weather might retard the evacuation, or in fact seriously alter the programme contemplated.

" The third, or final stage, in which the troops on shore should be embarked with all possible speed, leaving behind such guns, animals and stores as were needed for military reasons at this period.

" This problem with which we were confronted was the withdrawal of an army of considerable size from positions in no case more than three hundred yards from the enemy's trenches, and its embarkation on open beaches, every part of which was within range of Turkish guns, and from which, in winds from the south and south-west, the withdrawal of troops was not possible.

" The attitude which we should adopt from a naval and military point of view in case of a withdrawal from the Peninsula being ordered, had given me much anxious thought. According to text-book principles and lessons from history it seemed essential that this operation of evacuation should be immediately preceded by a combined naval and military feint in the neighbourhood of the Peninsula, with a view to distracting the attention of the Turks from our intention.

" When endeavouring to work out the concrete fact how such principles could be applied to the situation of our forces, I came to the conclusion that our chances of success were infinitely more probable if we made no departure of any kind from the normal life which we were following both on sea and land. A feint which did not fully fulfil its purpose would have been worse than useless, and there was obvious danger that the suspicion of the Turks would be aroused by our adoption of a course, the real purport of which could not have been long disguised."

During the period in which the Government had been discussing the question of the withdrawal from Gallipoli the time factor had been daily growing in importance. The storm of November had given an indication of what might be expected in the winter. Vice-Admiral Wemyss, writing of the evacuation from Suvla and Anzac, says :

" A southerly wind of even moderate force at any time during this period must have wrecked piers and have caused considerable

loss among the small craft—such loss of craft would have made anything in the nature of rapid evacuation an impossibility, and would have enormously increased the difficulties.”

This means that a moderate southerly wind would have eliminated the all-important element of surprise, and a gale would have caused a disaster.

On Monday morning, December 20th, by 5.30 a.m., the embarkations at Suvla and Anzac were completed. Twelve hours later the weather broke; a storm raged and the landing stages at Suvla and Anzac were washed away. The margin, which the Government had taken thirty-seven days in cutting, was indeed a narrow one.

It has been seen that the Government, when at last obliged to come to a definite decision on the question whether the Gallipoli Peninsula should be evacuated or not, was unable to refrain from looking both ways at once. Suvla and Anzac were to be given up; Helles was to be retained. But General Monro would not budge an inch from the position he had taken when writing the report in which he recommended the entire evacuation of the Peninsula, and not all the Government's piety, wit nor tears could induce him to cancel half a line of that report.

They turned to the General Staff, thinking that here perhaps they might get some support to their own desires. They got none. Sir W. Robertson endorsed General Monro's views absolutely: he blessed when it was hoped that he would curse. At last the Government yielded to Sir Charles' representations and warning regarding the daily increasing dangers of delay. On December 27th they gave their final consent to the withdrawal from Helles in a telegram which was received by General Monro on the 28th.

As in the case of Anzac and Suvla, the scheme for the withdrawal and re-embarkation had been prepared by the Dardanelles army in anticipation of Government's orders, and on December 24th Sir William Birdwood had been directed by the Commander-in-Chief to take the preliminary steps for an immediate evacuation which followed the same system as had been practised at Suvla and Anzac.

“The situation,” wrote Sir Charles in his despatch of March 6th, 1926, “had not materially changed owing to our withdrawal from Suvla and Anzac, except that there was a marked increased activity in aerial reconnaissance over our positions, and the islands of Mudros and Imbros, and that hostile patrolling of our trenches was more frequent and daring.

“The most apparent factor was that the number of heavy guns

on the European and Asiatic shores had been considerably augmented, and that these guns were more liberally supplied with German ammunition, the result of which was that our beaches were continuously shelled, especially from the Asiatic shore."

As already shown, a feint did not, in Sir Charles Monro's opinion, offer any prospect of success. Time and the uncertainty of weather conditions in the *Ægean* were among the reasons which influenced him in coming to this conclusion. It was decided, therefore, with the concurrence of the Vice-Admiral, that the Navy was to do its utmost to counter-batter the Turkish batteries should these open serious fire during the withdrawal, while in the event of the Turkish guns remaining quiescent, the Navy was to refrain from aggressive action. The final stage of the operation was to be completed in one night and the troops withdrawn direct from the fire trenches to the beaches without occupying any intermediate position. The lives of the troops were not to be endangered by the devotion of too much time to the destruction of stores or of bringing stores away with them.

We see in this last instruction, Sir Charles' readiness to free the commanders concerned from criticism for any undue haste in withdrawing which they might have had to face had the withdrawal been less successful than it was.

On the night of January 8th-9th the operation was carried through without a hitch, according to plan. By dawn of January 9th the entire evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula was completed. It has been rightly described as a triumph of staff work. Sir Charles Monro wrote in his despatch: "It demanded for its successful realization two important military essentials, viz. good luck and skilled disciplined organization, and they were both forthcoming to a marked degree at the hour needed. Our luck was in the ascendant by the marvellous spell of calm weather which prevailed. But we were able to turn to the fullest advantage these accidents of fortune.

"Lieutenant General Sir William Birdwood and his corps commanders elaborated and prepared the orders in reference to the evacuation with a skill, competence and courage which could not have been surpassed, and we had a further stroke of good fortune in being associated with Vice-Admiral Sir John de Robeck, Vice-Admiral Wemyss and a body of naval officers whose work remained throughout this anxious period at that standard of accuracy and professional ability which is beyond the power of criticism or cavil.

"The line of communication staff, both military and naval, represented respectively by Lieutenant General E. A. Altham,

Commodore S. M. Fitzmaurice, R.N., principal naval transport officer, and Captain H. V. Simpson, R.N., superintending transport officer, contributed to the success of the operation by their untiring zeal and conspicuous ability.

"The members of the Headquarters staff showed themselves, without exception, to be officers with whom it was a privilege to be associated; their competence, zeal and devotion to duty were uniform and unbroken."

To this generous appreciation of others the Dardanelles Commission appended the remark, "In these words of well-deserved commendation of officers and men, the name of Sir Charles Monro should be included."

The highest commendation is due to every officer and man engaged; none failed to give of their best. The Prime Minister announced the news of the evacuation to the Commons in the following words: "The House and Country will have learnt with extreme gratification of the successful retirement of the forces at Cape Helles without the loss of a single life. Eleven guns only were left behind—not a very large number—of which ten were worn-out fifteen-pounders, and before being abandoned all were rendered unfit for further service. Such of the stores and reserve ammunition which could not be removed were set on fire at the last moment and the whole retirement was conducted with an absolute minimum of loss.

"This operation, taken in conjunction with the earlier retirement from Suvla and Anzac, is, I believe, without parallel in military or naval history. That it should have been carried through with no appreciable loss, in view of the vast amount of personnel and material involved, is an achievement of which all concerned—commanding officers, officers and men in both Services—may well be proud. It deserves, and I am sure will receive, the profound gratitude of the King and Country, and will take an imperishable place in our national history.

"His Majesty will be advised that General Sir Charles Monro, Admirals de Robeck and Wemyss, Lieutenant Generals Birdwood and Davies and other generals who worked under them, shall receive special recognition."

The successful evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula will go down in history as a wonderful feat of arms, with which the names of General Sir Charles Monro, and Sir William Birdwood and Vice-Admiral Sir John de Robeck will be for ever associated.

The news swept away one of the heaviest clouds of suspense that hung over the British people during the War. Lord Derby writing to General Monro on December 27th, 1915, says: "What

a wonderful achievement of yours, getting all those men off Gallipoli. I don't think you can possibly imagine what a feeling of relief came over the whole country when we heard the news."

There were a few people outside the Government at the time, there are some even to-day, who held the opinion that, bringing fresh troops into the fight, we should have continued the offensive at the earliest possible moment, or maintaining our positions on the Peninsula throughout the winter we should have resumed the offensive in the following spring. This opinion is jejune; it pays no regard to the hard facts of the case.

In November, 1915, the Turks had on the Peninsula or at close call 200,000 rifles. The effective strength of the British was 90,000 rifles. In order to have any prospect of success it would have been necessary to raise the British forces to at least 250,000 rifles. It would not have been practicable to land the additional 100,000 reinforcements before the stormy winter season set in, not to mention the proportionate number of guns and the large amount of supplies of food, clothing and munitions which they would require.

Again, without extensive preparations which would have needed several months to complete, these masses of men with their transport animals could not have been disposed on the restricted area which existed behind our trench line, the whole area being exposed to observed artillery fire. The water supply was also limited and partly sea-borne and a succession of stormy days would have created an alarming situation in this respect. But perhaps the most important consideration of all was the certainty of an immense increase in the weight of artillery fire to which every portion of the ground occupied by us would be subjected, now that direct communication between Germany and Turkey was open.

The shelling of the trenches was already increasing daily and the casualty rate rising proportionately. Everyone having the experience of the Western Front will realize that a concentration of observed fire of heavy and medium guns would have quickly converted the contracted area held by the British into a terrible scene of desolation and carnage.

Since the War we have learnt that the Germans were actually preparing to bring about this dénouement, and had our withdrawal been delayed, the British arms would have suffered a disaster unparalleled in their history.

Sir Charles Monro had early appreciated the grave risks attendant on a decision to retain our positions on the Peninsula, and in addition to those which have been mentioned, he pointed

to the difficulties of supply and maintenance owing to the inadequate piers and the danger of these being destroyed; to the probability of the beaches being isolated from outside sources by stress of bad weather during the winter; to the great strain placed on the Navy; and to the fact that an increase in the enemy's gun power, if it did nothing worse, would enable the Turks to hold us in check with a small force, while they withdrew the bulk of their strength for operations elsewhere.

These were the facts and they cannot be ignored, although there may be a difference of opinion regarding the value to be given them. A commander, in whose hands lie the lives of his men and the welfare of his country, weighs the facts in scales that are generally more reliable and well-balanced than those held by the casual onlooker.

Field Marshal Sir William Robertson in a letter to *The Times* says: "Credit for the successful evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula was due to all who took part in it as Sir Charles himself was the first to declare, but to him alone, almost, was due the credit for evacuation taking place when it did."

"Fearing the possible consequences of withdrawal and the confession of failure which it involved, certain members of the Cabinet—Mr. Bonar Law being a notable exception—tried to prevent it or, at any rate, to delay it, and had not Sir Charles stood firm and declined to water down his expressed opinion that evacuation was imperative it might have been deferred until too late to be carried out at all, and at the best great hardships and additional loss of life would have been suffered by the troops for no useful purpose."

A proper share of the credit for the evacuation must be given to Field Marshal Sir William Robertson himself, for it was largely owing to his advice that the Cabinet nerved itself, at long last, to accept Sir Charles Monro's recommendations.

As a military operation it was one of the most remarkable achievements of the Great War. General Sir Ian Hamilton wrote in his despatch:

"On October 11th Your Lordship cabled asking me for an estimate of the losses which would be involved in an evacuation of the Peninsula. On October 12th I replied in terms showing that such a step was to me unthinkable."

He put the probable losses of a withdrawal at thirty thousand to forty thousand men, besides guns and stores and transport. He was supported in this estimate by others, both soldiers and civilians. The losses incurred were:

*At Anzac:* Four 18-pounder guns, two 5-inch howitzers,



one 4.7-inch naval gun, one aircraft gun, three 3-pounder hotchkiss, fifty-six mules, some carts stripped of their wheels, some supplies burnt.

*At Helles* : Ten worn-out 15-pounder guns, one 16-inch gun, six French old heavy guns—all these were blown up ; 508 animals, most of which were destroyed, some vehicles and a quantity of supplies and stores burnt.

*At Suvla* : Every man, gun and animal was embarked and a small stock of supplies was burnt.

General Sir Ian Hamilton's opinion was that which many another skilled and instructed soldier might have given, and yet it was one which after events proved was entirely wrong. If war were all science and no art, it would have been a correct opinion.

But there is a point in the conduct of war where science ceases and art comes in, and then it is that the seemingly impossible is accomplished : when Gideon and his hundred men with the battle cry, " a sword for the Eternal and for Gideon," routed the Midianites, the Amalekites and the Bedouin, " who were lying along the valley in swarms like locusts, and their camels were past counting, as the sand on the seashore ; " when the little *Revenge* fought, single-handed, the Spanish fleet of fifty-three great galleons from the uprising of the sun until its going down and " the stars came out far over the summer sea " ; when Wolfe scaled the cliff and assembled his army in the face of an enemy on the Heights of Abraham ; when Napoleon ordered his Polish Lancers to charge in the Pass of Somosierra and they put a whole Spanish army in position to flight—these were accomplishments of the seemingly impossible.

Similar actions are recorded on many pages of the History of War and the measure of their greatness is shown in their " impossibility," as gauged by the rules and conceptions of ordinary men.

The British nation owed a debt of gratitude to Sir Charles Monro for his clear vision and military insight, for his decided and lucid reports, for his undaunted adherence to the opinions he expressed and for his part as supreme director of the evacuation. The debt was never fully repaid as will be seen later.

With the issue of his instructions and orders in connection with the evacuation of Helles, Sir Charles' task at Gallipoli was finished. He had received a telegram from the War Office on December 30th directing him to hand over the command of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force to General Sir Archibald Murray, who had left London on December 28th. Consequently

he broke up his Headquarters at Mudros and proceeded with a small staff on H.M.S. *Cornwallis* to Alexandria. Here he had the satisfaction of receiving the news of the successful withdrawal and re-embarkation at Helles, and of knowing, on the last day of his command, that his harassing mission had ended in triumphant success. Sir Charles Monro was made a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St. Michael and St. George for his Gallipoli services.

He left Egypt in order to assume command of the First Army in France.

On the voyage the P. and O. ship on which Sir Charles and his personal staff were travelling was pursued one morning for a considerable distance by a German submarine. All the passengers sat on deck wearing their lifebelts. When the luncheon gong sounded Sir Charles told Lord Herbert Scott that it was a very bad thing to be either submerged or captured on an empty stomach, and the two descended to the saloon and enjoyed some excellent chops, while the majority of the passengers preferred to remain above. The approach of some British destroyers during the afternoon caused the submarine to sheer off, and the remainder of the voyage was completed without further incidents.

---

## CHAPTER VII

Monro assumes command of First Army in France. First Army Headquarters. Visits from Joffre, Clemenceau, and Archbishop of Canterbury. A letter. Chaplains. Service at Béthune. Colonel Repington. A letter. A French description. A dentist's painful experience. Misunderstandings. Monro as a Commander. His ideas on raids. His sympathy with young officers. His influence flows down many channels. Is asked to go to India.

WHEN Sir Charles Monro returned to France and took over the command of the First Army from General Sir Henry Rawlinson on January 4th, 1916, he found himself back in his old headquarters at Hinges. He shortly afterwards moved to Aire and took up his residence in the Château Jumelle which had been occupied by the King at the time of his accident.

The First Army was composed at this time of the I Corps (Gough), III Corps (Pulteney), IV Corps (Henry Wilson), XI Corps (Haking), and later the Canadian Corps (Byng).

The officers who lived in the château with the Army Commander were Major General G. Barrow<sup>1</sup> of the General Staff, Lieutenant Colonel Lord Herbert Scott, Assistant Military Secretary, and the two aides-de-camp, Captain Orr<sup>2</sup> and Lieutenant Troutbeck.<sup>3</sup> Prince Arthur of Connaught was attached to the First Army staff and often dined at Sir Charles's mess, when he used to amuse us with his reminiscences of visits and missions to foreign courts.

The visitors to the Château Jumelle were many and varied. Lord Kitchener came once or twice and was always most cordial in his manner to the Army Commander. Joffre came to lunch on April 12th, 1916, and of him Sir Charles writes: "Old Joffre came to lunch with us. Such a fine old boy, a very quiet taciturn old gentleman very unlike our estimate of a Frenchman. Unfor-

<sup>1</sup> The biographer.

<sup>2</sup> Now Lieutenant Colonel Orr.

<sup>3</sup> His nephew.

Other members of the staff were Major General "Freddie" Mercer, C.R.A., now Major General Sir Frederick Mercer, K.C.M.G., C.B., Major General Heath, Chief Engineer, afterwards Major General Sir R. Heath, K.C.M.G., C.B., Engineer-in-Chief to the B.E.F., Colonel "Sammy" Wilson, G.S.O.I., now Colonel Sir Samuel Wilson, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., K.B.E., Permanent Under-Secretary, Colonial Office.

tunately he does not speak a word of English and my French conversation is a very stunted vehicle (he spoke French well) so intercourse was not very easy. Jack gave us a 'Burra Khana,' all sorts of luxuries were dished out for us and we all ate much too much, an inevitable consequence of such functions."

Clémenceau also paid a visit to Sir Charles and stayed to lunch. The writer, who was sitting next to him, by way of making conversation, asked the trite question, "What do you suppose Napoleon would have done if he had been confronted with this deadlock of trench warfare?" Clémenceau, tapping his head with his forefinger, replied, "We cannot say because we have not got Napoleon's brain." Which calls to mind an incident which occurred a few days later when an able, but perhaps over self-confident officer from G.H.Q. explained to the writer, on a large map which hung on the wall of the general staff room, exactly what Napoleon would have done in the existing circumstances; which called from the writer, reminiscent of his recent conversation with Clémenceau, the remark that if he (the officer from G.H.Q.) could tell so easily what Napoleon would have done, then Napoleon would not have been Napoleon.

Another visitor was the late Archbishop of Canterbury, who spent a night at the Château Philomel.<sup>1</sup> Sir Charles alludes to this visit in a letter dated June 11th, 1916: "... Again, he is not a bad chap and is really very fond of his old regiment which is a great thing in my opinion although it must be confessed that a good many elderly gents profess a wonderful interest in their regiments after they have left who never gave a hand's turn when they were in it."<sup>2</sup> Old Jack (his nephew) had a real festive evening when the Archbishop was with us. He sat next to the Archbishop's chaplain at dinner, who is one of the most resolutely silent men I ever met. The old Arch himself is a very amusing old bean and very human. He regaled us with lots of quite amusing stories."

Writing home on March 19th, Sir Charles says: "Beyond the ordinary round of work I have had to send recommendations for the Dardanelles show and found myself confronted with a pile of papers which stood about three feet high, all relating to poor chaps who had had a very, very hard time of it, so to put their cases properly, meant a lot of investigation. . . . The main point of interest of course has been the Verdun fighting, which has been terrific, according to what we hear. The heavy

<sup>1</sup> The First Army Headquarters had moved from Aire to the Château Philomel at Lillers.

<sup>2</sup> This remark obviously does not refer to the Archbishop.

artillery bombardment was simply terrific, quite beyond anything that has ever been experienced. The net result has been that the French have got their tails up and are in high spirits, while the Germans have lost a host of men.

" They attacked in the old way and with great determination, but when their columns get under fire of the French guns, which is a very deadly weapon, the consequences are inevitable and some of their corps have been decimated. What a tribute the whole business is to the humanity of the world and Christianity. We have as our Chaplain, a real wonderful preacher. I have never heard anyone like him. . . . "

The Chaplain<sup>1</sup> referred to describes his first interview with the Army Commander on his appointment as Assistant-Chaplain General to the First Army. He says : " Sir Charles eyed me up and down some time before he spoke and then came the question, ' Blackburne, why do so many parsons have funny voices ? One voice for a service and another voice for the street. In church it is ten to one that they will call it Know-ledge, but outside they call it Knowledge. Why on earth do they do it ? ' "

He went into the organization of the Chaplains' department and gave the same careful consideration to matters concerning its efficiency as he did to any other branch of the Army. He made it plain to the Chaplains that he was behind them in their work.

Schools for chaplains were first started in the First Army, at which the chaplains met together for several days to discuss their work, and any suggestions which emanated from the school were always sympathetically dealt with by the Army Commander himself.

Chaplains of all denominations knew that their work was appreciated and supported by the Army Commander, who made a point of attending as many parade services held in the army area as the military situation and his manifold duties permitted. On several occasions he addressed gatherings of chaplains, and those who heard these addresses will not forget the plain, straight manner of his speech and the note of religious conviction which lay behind his words.

A church parade service was held in the Square at Béthune at 11 a.m. on August 6th, 1916, in order to commemorate the second anniversary of the British Empire's entry into the War. The large square was filled with a densely packed mass of troops. Ministers of all denominations, Church of England, Scottish and Free Church, Presbyterian, Methodists—all took part in the service and the Army Commander himself gave an address.

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. H. W. Blackburne, D.S.O., M.C.

A few minutes after 11 a.m. on the following day, the Germans started to shell the Square with heavy stuff and high explosives. Great damage was done and several civilians were killed. They had not shelled the Square before and the bombardment was not repeated. It is generally supposed that the Germans had information from a spy or some other source of the intention to hold the parade service in the Béthune Square and the only mistake made was in the date. Had the bombardment taken place on August 6th instead of the 7th, the result would have been appalling.

We get a glimpse of Sir Charles at this time from the diaries of Colonel Repington. An entry dated July 9th, 1916, reads: "Charles Monro came in from a ride about 5.30. We had tea and a talk at his Headquarters. Monro's three army corps take up the line from Allenby to a point south of Armentières. He can hang on, but thinks that the Lens bit of his ground is very nasty. . . . Monro says that many German heavy batteries which had been located on his front are now silent, and the guns may have been taken away, but all he can say is that they are not firing. . . . He thinks that if we could take the Vimy Ridge we should also have to take the villages beyond it, or we should have trouble, and our observation points would not be secure. He thinks that the Boches are fighting well, but are decidedly tired, and on the whole, are not fighting with their old fire. They appear to be exhausted, and make very poor counter-attacks, the Guard excepted. Most of the Guard prisoners, it is generally agreed, are fine fellows.

"He listened carefully to Foch's ideas of artillery, which I passed on to him, and he did not differ from them. Monro says that his mining companies are doing finely. They are recruited from all over the world and he has done a good lot of damage to the enemy by mining and raids. One of the latter had killed ninety and captured forty Boches.

"Monro's mind and brain are as good as ever. He has first and second lines, and then groups of defensible posts, well wired up, and then a last line. He does not think the Boches could do more than make a slight indentation. But all army commanders agree that the Boches can wreck our front trenches whenever they please. Monro told me that ten Germans had been cornered in a mine, and were called on to surrender, or they would all be blown up. They refused to surrender, and up they went."

In April, 1916, Monro writes: "We have been very busy and the dreadful casualty lists which have appeared lately will explain what we have been at. It is very painful to refer to this

subject ; there is only one consolation, the Boches suffered much more heavily than we did. They got a real ousting ; this is no exaggeration and if we had had a little bit of luck, a big coup might have been accomplished. But in all the turmoil that prevails in these circumstances events do not come off always in the way it is hoped that they will. Our chief need is our munitions, and for that we are dependent on our good friends the workers ; if they play up we will have another smack at our pals, and not one smack, but plenty of them, for our men are in fine fettle and quite ready to do anything asked of them. It is a great comfort to us all that the winter is now over ; the longer periods of light makes work in the trenches much brighter than it used to be in sombre winter months. . . .”

Sir Charles must have been feeling particularly well and optimistic on the day when he wrote that letter.

The following vivid little French picture of Sir Charles, written towards the end of the Somme battle, is of interest : “ Une belle cérémonie s’est déroulée à Merville, jeudi après-midi sur la grande place où flottait à toutes les maisons le drapeau tricolore. Le Général Monro, chef de la première armée, a décoré une centaine d’officiers et de soldats qui s’étaient distingués au cours des récentes opérations.

“ Le nom du Général Monro est trop connu pour que nous ayons besoin d’énumérer les hauts faits de ce grand chef. Nous nous bornerons à rappeler l’indépendance avec laquelle il décida qu’il convenait d’évacuer la péninsule de Gallipoli et le rare talent avec lequel il assura l’exécution de cette opération si difficile, accomplie avec des pertes d’hommes insignifiantes.

“ Le Général ressemble physiquement à notre Joffre. Il a sa tête énergique, ses yeux vifs et aussi cette cordialité qui a rendu le généralissime si cher aux soldats français. Pour chacun des officiers ou des hommes qu’il décora, il a un mot qui amène un sourire sur ces figures basanées, un mot qui sera rapporté la-bas en Grande Bretagne aux mères, aux femmes, aux fiancées, et que les familles n’oublieront jamais.

“ Les décorations sont distribuées et les troupes forment le carré. Le général parle. Très simplement mais d’une voix vibrante et qui porte, il exalte les vertus militaires et les rares mérites de l’exemple : ‘ Soldats que je viens de décorer et vous aussi qui rendez ici les honneurs à vos camarades, vous avez accompli votre devoir, tout votre devoir. Grâce à votre dévouement, à votre énergie, à votre courage, il a été impossible aux Allemands de détacher de cette ligne un seul régiment pour l’envoyer dans le sud. Le bout que nous nous proposons

d'atteindre a été atteint. Vous avez le droit d'être fier de votre conduite.

“ ‘Soldats décorés, je vais, avant de terminer cette cérémonie, vous donner la plus belle marque d'estime qu'un chef puisse donner à ses hommes ; vos camarades vont défiler devant vous.’

“ Et après l'audition de ‘La Marsellaise’ et de ‘God save the King,’ le défile commence. Impeccable, au pas de parade, les troupes passent devant le général et la ligne des décorés. Il serait difficile de trouver une troupe manœuvrant avec un semblable précision et dans un ordre aussi parfait.

“ La cérémonie est terminée et la foule s'écoule, mais chacun des assistants gardera longtemps le souvenir de cette belle et imposante fête militaire.”

A famous American dentist who had given up a lucrative practice in Paris in order to help the British forces with his skill, not only in dentistry but also in cases of serious jaw wounds, was a great admirer of Sir Charles. He used to visit the Headquarters of the First and Third Armies from time to time and generally stayed to lunch, and occasionally slept at the château. He travelled in a Rolls Royce car fitted up as a dental workshop. He was fond of talking about his horsemanship, the steeplechases he had won and the equestrian feats of a rodeo nature which he had been accustomed to perform in the Wild West.

One lovely Sunday, after lunch, Sir Charles Monro invited him to go for an afternoon ride. The dentist, having just been declaring that riding was his favourite pastime, could not well refuse and he was provided with a remount ex 9th Lancers—a perfect mount. The party no sooner broke into a trot than it became evident that the dental surgeon was very out of practice, to say the least of it, and in spite of holding hard on to the saddle with one hand, nearly came to disaster more than once. It was an occasion when his favourite pastime failed to please. It even caused him some after-suffering, for a few days later a letter came from him, addressed to Sir Charles, in which he confessed that he had slightly over-estimated his skill in horsemanship with the result that he had been in hospital ever since the day of the ride, and that he would not be fit for work again for some days, even though his work was performed in a standing position.

When the First Army Commander was occupying the château, the owner lived in an adjoining house with his family, which consisted of his wife and two daughters, about sixteen and eighteen years old. One day, wishing to be civil to our landlord, an aide-de-camp who spoke French indifferently, but was not



at all diffident in the matter, was sent across to invite the owner and his family to dinner. The aide-de-camp returned to say that the invitation had been met with an indignant refusal and we had then been told to get out of the house. Somewhat surprised, he subjected the aide-de-camp to a cross-examination as to what had actually passed between him and the landlord. He explained that Monsieur had asked him what dress the ladies should appear in, and he had replied that they could come in any dress they pleased, but that we should prefer them in their evening dresses. When pressed to repeat the conversation as rendered by him in French he said "I told Monsieur 'que nous aimerons beaucoup à voir Madame et ses deux filles dans leurs robes de nuit.'" Sir Charles had himself to go and appease the outraged feelings of the husband and father, and the family came to dinner clad in a normal fashion.

This was not the only regrettable incident in connection with our landlord's family. One day the writer was working in his office when he was told that Madame was in the hall and wanted to see him. He found her flushed and agitated, with one of the daughters, who was also flushed but not agitated, standing at the foot of the staircase. She complained that they had come to fetch some clothes which they had left in a wardrobe on the first storey, but that they could not possibly ascend because there were two Highlanders cleaning the top stairs, that they had in fact made the attempt but had been obliged to retreat in confusion.

General Monro was not an adventurous leader in the field, but he was a resolute commander. When he saw clearly that the enemy should be attacked he would attack to the utmost limit of his strength. When he stood on the defensive he was prepared to hold his ground with the utmost tenacity.

In France he favoured raids on the enemy trenches for the purpose of obtaining important identifications, to wipe out some annoying machine-gun post, to hold the enemy in his front and keep them from transferring troops to some other part of the line. Raids for the sake of raiding, in order "to kill Germans," which often meant the killing of an equal or greater number of British; the periodical raids which some commanders persisted in ordering with the mistaken notion that they maintained a moral superiority over the enemy—these were abhorrent to him.

It is impossible to ensure in war that some lives will not be wasted. Every attack which ends in failure must lead to such sacrifices. But Sir Charles Monro, like Wellington and many



SIR CHARLES MONRO, WITH LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ASPINALL,  
AT GALLIPOLI



great commanders, balanced carefully in his mind the tangible results which stood to be gained against the lives of his men, before he would willingly consent to any adventitious operation. More than once he interfered in order to restrain the impetuosity of a subordinate commander.

As an example of Sir Charles Monro's humane side the case may be given of a young officer who had overstayed his leave and was liable to be tried for desertion. He had gone to Boulogne to see the dentist and presumably the discomfort of the dentist's chair had caused him to take rather more wine than was good for him, with the result that he was absent without leave when his regiment went into action. Sir Charles turned up the young officer's record and found that he was a fine athlete, captain of his public school eleven and also captain of the rugby team. His record at Sandhurst had been good both in work and in athletics and he had shown a good influence over junior cadets. "Such a record," said Sir Charles, "shows that this young officer was absent owing to a temporary loss of balance and not from any lack of courage," and therefore the case against him was one for severe reprimand.

The Army Commander's action was shortly afterwards justified by the distinguished conduct of the young officer in a subsequent action when his regiment suffered severe losses.

Another case was that of a young officer, little more than a schoolboy, who broke down hopelessly the first time he came under fire. Sir Charles dealt with this case by sending him home to the reserve battalion for further training.

There is one attribute, wanting which a general may be a good and even successful leader in the field, but can never hope to become a great commander, whatever opportunities may fall to him. It is the gift of personal magnetism, the power of impressing his personality on all ranks, individually and collectively, in the army which he commands. Its possession is essential to high military achievement, for it is the faculty which in war makes "the impossible" possible. It is a gift which is parsimoniously bestowed, and Sir Charles Monro must be numbered among the two or three higher commanders in the Great War who alone possessed it. This was apparent within a few weeks of his taking over command of the First Army. He was something more than the Army Commander to the regimental officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the First Army; he was not simply one above them; he was one of them.

The influence of a pervading personality flows through many channels. One of these is illustrated in the following letter

received by the writer from an officer formerly of The Scots Greys.<sup>1</sup>

"In July, 1916, my regiment, The Scots Greys, was billeted in the neighbourhood of Merville. We had an amateur theatrical troupe which was to give an entertainment at Hazebrouck and Sir Charles asked if he might be present. He did us the honour of coming to the show and afterwards joined us at supper. That night he entered into the spirit of everything in a most marvellous manner. He never came through Merville afterwards without having lunch or tea at our Headquarters. He always at those gatherings entered into our regimental life more like a subaltern than an army commander. . . . I have never met a more charming man in my life, and after his death always have felt I should like to let someone closely connected with him know how greatly loved and respected he was by all the officers of The Greys."

And here is another illustration: "I know how deeply touched Hesketh Prichard<sup>2</sup> will be when he hears what you say of him. You do not, I expect, realize the sort of way in which these young officers idolize you. In the case of Hesketh Prichard there is not only the feeling that you are the man who will lead them to victory, and who has won their hearts by what always wins the hearts of Englishmen, absence of selfishness and presence of modesty and chivalry, but also the expert's feeling that you do understand and estimate at its full worth the value of scientific musketry. That is the point that Hesketh Prichard is always harping upon. He keeps saying that he can do ten times better work for General Monro than he can for anybody else because the General 'understands.' "

Once Sir Charles had the foreboding that he would not be left long in his present command. On August 1st, 1916, Sir Douglas Haig sent for him to General Headquarters, and informed him that the Cabinet wished him to go as Commander-in-Chief to India. He returned to his Headquarters at Lillers with a very heavy heart, but never a thought of either protesting or complaining. A relation of his says: "I and my wife went to see him in London just before he left (for India). It is the only time I ever remember seeing him depressed. He realized the tremendous task he was taking on; he hated leaving France. Only his tremendous sense of duty made him do it. He said to me sadly, 'I was brought up never to question the decisions of my superiors and never to refuse any appointment offered me however much I dislike it.' "

<sup>1</sup> Colonel W. F. Collins, D.S.O.

<sup>2</sup> Famous big game hunter and novelist. Commandant of the First Army Sniping School in France.

## CHAPTER VIII

Monro assumes command in India. Indian national characteristics. Discipline. Dual rôle of the Army in India. Expeditions prior to Great War. Strength of forces in 1914. India's assistance in the event of the Empire being involved in war. Contingents supplied by India in 1914. Monro's great task. His personal sacrifice. Sir Beauchamp Duff. Monro's first act. King's Commissions for Indians. Clubs. Decentralization. Status of A.G.'s and Q.M.G.'s departments raised. Reconstitution of commands. Inspections.

**G**ENERAL SIR CHARLES MONRO assumed command of the Army in India on October 1st, 1916. In order to appreciate the magnitude of his achievement during the four years that he held this position it is necessary to be acquainted with the military situation which existed on that date.

Since the days when the British first set foot on her shores, India has attracted some of the finest soldiers and administrators that our race has produced. It seems as if the native qualities which are germinated in the sterner soil of our island become expanded and stimulated in the sunlight of an oriental atmosphere, provided they are sufficiently sturdy to resist the enervating influences which are inseparable from that environment. Whatever failures there may have been in our administration and control of India, they may be traced almost, if not entirely, to a disregard of the human element which constitutes the soul of a people, while placing too great a reliance on those bureaucratic institutions which are largely the outcome of doctrinaire theories.

Strange contrasts are to be found in the national characteristics of most peoples, and there is one contrast in the Indian mind which is peculiarly distinctive. The Indian is exceptionally responsive to personal rule, to government from the saddle, to decisions and orders given by one in authority on the spot. He appreciates, respects and trusts this sort of government and prefers it greatly to a government carried on by codified rules and regulations and official notifications which are enforced, where necessary, by courts of law rather than by personal influence. At the same time, he loves to bind himself round with red tape ; he revels in legal quibbles, and has greater respect for the letter of the law than for its spirit.

It is naturally difficult for those who have not spent some years in India, nor come into close contact with its inhabitants, to realize this contrariety. It is here that we may perhaps find the reason for the variance of opinion which so often exists regarding Indian problems, between those whose lives have been passed in India and those who sit in Whitehall.

The Army in India comprises the Indian Army and a large proportion of the British service. The Indian Army is composed of Indian troops. It is different from other armies in two important respects.

The personnel consists of men professing the anti-pathetic religions of Muhammadanism and Hinduism with its many shades and castes. It is administered and led by men of a different race, speech, colour and creed. For these reasons it is a complicated and sensitive machine which can only be maintained in good working order by those who know it well. It has unlimited faith and confidence in the leaders whom it trusts. Its fortitude in facing hardship and death is chronicled in many pages of the history of war.

In the nature of his discipline also the Indian soldier differs from the soldier of Western armies. Discipline is of two kinds. There is the educated discipline of intelligence and there is the uneducated discipline of faith. The one has its roots in the knowledge that there must be discipline and obedience if there is to be any order and any success ; that without discipline there is no army, only a rabble ; and that indiscipline on the part of an individual will not be supported by the public opinion of his comrades. The strength of the other lies in a simple trust in the judgment, justice and leadership of those in authority and in a belief that there can be no better way of going than that which the officer orders. It is the latter which is the discipline of the Indian Army. It is a fact which has not hitherto received sufficient attention in the discussions concerning the Indianization of the commissioned ranks in the Indian army.

The purpose of armies, with rare exceptions, is to support the foreign policies of their respective Governments, and in the last resort, to protect their countries from foreign invasion. It is only occasionally that they are called on to support their civil authorities in the maintenance and restoration of peace within their borders.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There are many persons who hold the opinion that the purpose of armed forces is confined to that of protection, but if one looks honestly at the political situation in Europe to-day (April, 1931) one is bound to admit that armaments do still have a great influence in foreign policies.

The Army in India has a dual obligation to fulfil. It secures India equally from the dangers without and from the dangers within. The dangers which threaten from without are twofold—one distant and threatening, the other ever present and sometimes active.

The vast shadow of Russia has often touched the heights of the Hindu Kush; some would say that it touches them now. Afghanistan and the Frontier tribes, although they do not constitute any serious threat to India, necessitate the maintenance of large frontier garrisons for the protection of the frontier provinces. The aggression of these tribes have brought on seventy-two military expeditions and minor campaigns during the last seventy-two years.

Although, responding to the call of the Empire, India has lent her troops for service abroad on many occasions prior to the year 1914, she has, strictly speaking, been under no obligations in this respect. The policy as regards the employment of the Army in India has been officially stated as follows: "While India should provide for her own defence against local aggression and, if necessary, for an attack on the Indian Empire by a Great Power until reinforcements can come from home, she is not called upon to maintain troops for the specific purpose of placing them at the disposal of the Home Government for wars outside the Indian sphere, although, as has happened in the past, she may lend troops if they are otherwise available." She has, in fact, furnished expeditions or provided men and material for service in Manila, Macao, Java, Bourbon, Abyssinia, Egypt, in 1801 and 1882, the Sudan in 1885, South Africa in 1899, Somaliland and China in 1865, 1900 and 1926. Valuable as these contributions have been, in no case did the formations which sailed from India exceed a total of eighteen thousand men.

In all these instances the draft was made on India because she was geographically much more favourably situated for the despatch of troops to the scene of action than the other garrisons of the Empire, and it was made when the horizon was cloudless and no kind of danger threatened the country from any direction.

The assistance which India might expect to receive from Imperial resources in the event of a war with a first-rate power, as well as the assistance which India could give to the rest of the Empire in the event of an emergency which threatened the safety of the Empire, had naturally been the subject of discussion by the British and Indian Governments, on more than one occasion. The result of those discussions was an understanding between the British Government and the Government of India that, in



an emergency which threatened the Empire, India would, provided conditions were normal in India and on her frontiers, provide a force of two divisions and one cavalry brigade for service overseas and that "in circumstances of special urgency, it might be possible, though at some risk, to provide an additional division."

As soon as the emergency arose the cold bargainings, assurances and calculations that had occupied so many of the spacious office hours of peace time were, as not infrequently happens in similar circumstances, immediately thrown on one side. When the Great War broke out, India, too, showed that something of the spirit of sacrifice which does not count the cost and which inspired the whole Empire, was stirring within her. It is true, Russia being our ally, all serious apprehension regarding the safety of the northern frontier was removed, but this does not detract from the meritorious spontaneity of the assistance India gave, nor from the merit that the subsequent expansion of her military efforts deserves.

The part India played in the Great War, a part so vastly greater than she had been prepared to undertake, either by design or by anticipation, has never received from the public either in these isles or in the other parts of the Empire, the recognition which it deserves. This is natural, considering the stupendous military exertions which were being made in the Homeland, the pre-occupation of everyone in the operations nearest at hand and in which one's own people were engaged, and the bewildering situation which following on the termination of hostilities.

From the year 1917 onwards Sir Charles Monro, with the unfailing support of the Viceroy (Lord Chelmsford) and the Government of India, was the chief inspirer and organizer of one of the most remarkable expansions in man-power and munitions outside Great Britain and the Dominions which have ever been known under a voluntary system of service.

By the time General Monro landed at Bombay, India had already despatched from her shores a considerably greater number of troops than she had admitted, a short year before, she would be able to spare outside her own confines.

In August, 1914, the strength of the Army in India was two hundred and thirty-six thousand men, of whom seventy-seven thousand were British troops and one hundred and fifty-nine thousand were Indian. Of these numbers more than half of the British and about one-fifth of the Indian troops were earmarked for Internal Security duties. The remainder were organized into a field army of nine divisions and eight cavalry brigades. But a

properly constituted and efficient fighting force cannot be placed in the field unless the ancillary services are proportionate to the muster rolls. Unfortunately these services in India were very defective and in some cases non-existent. Peace establishments were inadequate and the Internal Security units had to be depleted in order that the field formations might be mobilized up to strength. There was no Air Force and no mechanical transport. Artillery, machine-guns, hospital equipment, field ambulances and veterinary hospitals were glaringly insufficient to meet the demands of modern civilized warfare. Reserves of men, horses and animal transport hardly sufficed to furnish the first reinforcements. No organization existed for recruiting and training further reinforcements, while for the munitions of war India was almost entirely dependent on external sources. The immediate effect of all these deficiencies was that of the nine divisions and eight cavalry brigades only seven divisions and five cavalry brigades could be sufficiently staffed and equipped to take part in anything bigger than a minor expedition. The transport was unsuited to modern conditions of warfare on a large scale, the weight of artillery with each division was quite inadequate, as were the signalling, medical and other equipment.

Closely following on the declaration of war in August, 1914, the Home Government requested India to provide two infantry divisions and one cavalry brigade for garrison duty in Egypt and the Sudan. The Indian Government complied at once with the mobilization of the 3rd and 7th Divisions and the 9th Cavalry Brigade. At the same time they pointed out that "it was most desirable from every point of view that India should be represented on the European front." Meanwhile the Home Government demand had been increased by two cavalry divisions instead of the one brigade originally asked for. Consequently within three weeks of the declaration of war an Indian corps and a cavalry corps consisting altogether of sixteen thousand British and twenty-eight thousand five hundred Indian ranks sailed for France.

Further requests by the Home Government rapidly followed. A mixed force, including six battalions, was required for operations in German East Africa and three battalions for the protection of Zanzibar and the Mombasa-Nairobi railway. These two contingents which included a considerable number of Indian State troops amounted to fifteen thousand British and ten thousand two hundred and fifty Indian ranks. An infantry brigade of the 6th Division was sent to protect the Abadan pipe line and on the declaration of war with Turkey, the remainder of

the 6th Division was despatched to the Shatt-el-Arab. The strength of this force was four thousand five hundred British and twelve thousand Indian ranks.

Six infantry brigades (one of which was composed of Indian State troops) and one Indian State cavalry brigade numbering one thousand five hundred British and twenty-seven thousand five hundred Indian ranks were sent to Egypt. A small Indian contingent co-operated with the Japanese in the capture of the German naval base at Tsing-tao.

Having met all the calls made on her for active assistance in France, Egypt, East Africa and Mesopotamia, India went further and released thirty-two British infantry battalions and twenty batteries of artillery, aggregating thirty-five thousand five hundred British ranks and two hundred and four guns, which proceeded to England in order to facilitate the expansion of the army at home. These troops were replaced by thirty-five Territorial battalions and twenty-nine Territorial batteries.

The personnel composing these units was of first rate quality, but they were semi-trained, indifferently equipped and strangers to Indian conditions of life and frontier warfare. They steadily improved and by the end of the war their fighting value was high, but at first they were an inefficient substitute for the regular troops whom they replaced.

Thus the total number of troops provided by India for service overseas at the commencement of the War amounted to one hundred and one thousand five hundred men. She had already, when the War was but four months old, depleted herself to the extent of twenty-one cavalry regiments, sixty infantry battalions and two hundred and four guns, thereby exceeding by eighteen cavalry regiments, thirty battalions and over one hundred guns, the force which she had originally agreed to contribute in the event of a war of the first magnitude, while having due regard to her own particular security.<sup>1</sup> The British regular troops left in India were three cavalry regiments, twelve batteries of artillery and nine battalions of infantry.

As the War continued India's responsibilities in connection with it increased. By the middle of 1915 Indian troops were being employed in France and Belgium, in Egypt, in Gallipoli, in Mesopotamia, in South and East Persia, in East Africa, in the Cameroons, in the Aden Hinterland and in Somaliland, besides guarding the North-East and North-West frontiers of India and providing garrisons for several colonial stations.

<sup>1</sup> Russia being our ally, there was no immediate danger of any attack on India by a Great Power.



GALLIPOLI, THE LAST SCENE



Before the end of 1915 the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force had expanded from one division to over fifty thousand fighting men. All these contingents and expeditionary forces had to be maintained at war strength, and the wastage in France, Gallipoli, Mesopotamia and German East Africa was abnormally high, amounting in some cases to fifty per cent. of establishment in three months. Early in 1916 labour corps, aggregating twenty-eight thousand men, drawn from all parts of India, were raised for service in France in order to conserve British manpower.

India had, therefore, given of the best with both hands, from her military resources, in response to the Empire call, when Sir Charles Monro assumed the chief command. But more, much more, was yet to be required of her, and it was Sir Charles' great task to stimulate her to renewed exertions, to dominate and direct those efforts and to transmute their results into organized and efficient fighting formations.

When considering the manifold labours of a Commander-in-Chief in India it would be idle to discuss the well-known Curzon-Kitchener controversy which led to the resignation of the Viceroy. The most that need be said is that there is probably no one who sided at the time with Lord Curzon's views who has since had cause to change his mind.

The Gilbertian situation in which the Commander-in-Chief makes a recommendation to the Government of India through the Army Department and vetoes it next day himself as Army Department Member speaking in the name of the Government is not brought out in official correspondence. Nevertheless, some Commanders-in-Chief have occasionally hearkened more readily to the silken tones of the Army Department Secretary than they have to the artless accents of their principal staff officers, with results not always beneficial to the regimental units and other fighting formations. But when Lord Kitchener introduced his scheme whereby the Commander-in-Chief became responsible for the executive control of the army and its organization and also for everything connected with its administration, supply and linked questions of finance, the possibilities of the Montague-Chelmsford reforms had entered nobody's head. Nowadays a Commander-in-Chief combines in his person the duties and responsibilities of the Army Council and of the War Minister in all that appertains to training, organization, administration and finance and is, in addition, a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, of the Council of State and ex officio of the Legislative Assembly.

Few will disagree with the opinion expressed in the Report of the Indian Statutory Commission (Simon Commission) that "the Commander-in-Chief should not be a member of the Executive Council and should not sit in the Legislative Assembly. His immensely important duties are better discharged outside it." The Montague-Chelmsford reforms had not been initiated when Sir Charles Monro arrived to take over the supreme command from General Sir Beauchamp Duff. Nevertheless the multiplicity and complexity of the problems occasioned by the War and by the process of reconstruction after its termination, super-added to the discharge of the normal duties appertaining to the combined offices of Commander-in-Chief and Army Member, placed a burden on Sir Charles that no other Commander-in-Chief in India has been called upon to bear.

Sir Charles Monro bade farewell to the First Army and turned away from France with a heavy heart. He abhorred the act of war with its accompanying death and miseries and for the separation which it brought from what was to him the dearest thing on earth. Nevertheless, it was his ardent longing, since war there was, to be where the battle joined.

The early days of the War had given him the opportunity, so often denied to those who belong to the fighting professions, and he had grasped that opportunity with both hands. Every man has his limit and Sir Charles had shown himself and the world at large that his limit stretched far. He had enhanced his reputation in the eyes of the soldiers and the nation by the strength and judgment he had displayed in connection with Gallipoli. And now, when he had reached the crest of a soldier's ambition, the command of an army in the field, he was transferred to a position where work and responsibilities not less arduous and exacting were to be performed, unaided by the inspiration which is born of battle.

Throughout his service it had been one of the tenets of Monro's military creed that an officer of whatever rank must go where his services are required, with as little question as a soldier is expected to comply with an order. He went, therefore, to India without one protest or expression to higher authority of his own feelings in the matter. What those feelings were he only revealed to a few of his intimate acquaintances.

Writing to a near relation in August, 1916, he says, "It has been rather a scramble trying to get things together for the shiny in a short time, especially as I cannot get into a stitch of kit which I wore before the War, not a garment will go round me. It is horrible, as you can understand I hate the prospect

of going to India most heartily. . . . Still, it cannot be helped as soldiers have to go where they are told."

One would expect to find a striking resemblance in the characters of men who rise to the top in any particular profession. Although there must be certain qualities common to all who succeed, without which success could never be achieved, the extent to which the successful ones differ in their general make up is surprising. "Il y a fagots et fagots." Nowhere are these contrasts more prominent than among great military commanders, as may be seen by taking a glance at the soldiers and sailors who have come to the forefront in the past, including the Great War.

The dissimilarity in character between Sir Charles Monro and the retiring Commander-in-Chief was more than ordinarily marked. Sir Beauchamp Duff had passed nearly the whole of his peace time service at Army Headquarters. He had filled the appointments of Deputy Assistant Adjutant General, Deputy Adjutant General, Adjutant General, and Chief of the Staff to Lord Kitchener, whose right-hand man he had been during the greater part of Lord Kitchener's tenure of office. He had been appointed to the command of a regiment and of a brigade, and he never assumed the command of either. After a period at the India Office as Military Secretary, he returned to India as Commander-in-Chief. He had an exceptional knowledge of all matters connected with the administration of the Army in India. He was an untiring worker. His mind moved clearly and logically, and no one could write a better reasoned memorandum. He was essentially an office man, in which capacity he was pre-eminent. But the qualities which are invaluable in successful administration in peace time are different from the qualities which lead to success in War. When a man has spent a great part of his life in company with finance as his masterful partner, it is not easy to suddenly cut himself adrift from the trammels of office routine or to treat finance as something of secondary importance.

Sir Charles Monro, both by temperament and training, had been cast in an entirely different mould. A great part of his career had been spent as a regimental officer. All his service in peace and war had been performed in close contact with soldiers. He had no liking for office work, although when it came to a question of writing a despatch or a memorandum, he expressed himself with conviction and clearness, and often with originality. He was never more at home than when he was among soldiers, and he was never quite happy away from them. He had hardly arrived in India when it was realized that a very



different driver from the previous one was handling the reins. Almost his first act, insignificant as it was, gave indication of a coming change.

Notwithstanding the military efforts she had already put forth, India had not hitherto been touched by the War as closely as were most other portions of the Empire. Although the Indian troops who had set out to fight represented a large proportion of the Army they stood for a very small portion of the three hundred million inhabitants of Hindustan. There were no food, or similar restrictions, and the battles which were being fought out in France and elsewhere were too distant for the din to reach her ears. Consequently there was no change in the ordinary existence of the people and even among Europeans social life was only modified to a limited extent. At Army Headquarters officers still continued to wear a peace-time order of uniform in which white shirts, white linen collars and black ties took the place of the service dress which had become the costume of eighty per cent. of the men in Britain. Sir Charles Monro became aware of this fact directly he reached Bombay and a telegram was received in Simla on the following day to say that the new Commander-in-Chief, on his arrival there in three days' time, expected to be received by all the Headquarter officers in service dress. Consternation followed, and raids on all the tailors, linen drapers, durzees and cloth shops of Simla in search of khaki shirts, ties and collars or khaki material for the purpose of making those articles, accompanied by much borrowing and lending, and in a few instances the creation of those ingenious substitutes known as "dickies." It was the first intimation that henceforth India, at least as far as the army was concerned, was to consider herself a belligerent country as much as any other which came under the British Crown, and that the military element was to behave accordingly.

One of the first questions, and because of its implications one of the most important, to engage General Monro's attention after his arrival at Simla was the granting of the King's Commission to Indians. On a casual glance this would appear to be a comparatively small matter which concerned the Army alone.

But a completely self-governing India, claiming the right to secede from the Empire at will, can never be an actual fact as long as she depends for her security, external and internal, on British troops and British officers in command of the Indian troops, that is until she possesses a national army which is wholly Indian. Whether the small seed which was sown by the bestowal of the King's Commission grows into a great tree under which a

self-governing India can securely shelter or whether the plant wilts in early growth, it remains for India to decide for herself. One can safely say that a *representative* National army will not be possible so long as nearly eighty per cent. is composed of men drawn from the United Provinces and the North-West Frontier Province and the Punjab, or, in other words, until the inhabitants of Bengal, Madras, Gujrat and other non-martial races have developed a martial spirit—a process which is likely to take some considerable time.

Up to the time of the Great War Indians had been debarred from holding the King's Commission in the military forces. The highest grade which an Indian could attain in the Army was that conferred by the Viceroy's Commission. Hence the most senior Indian officer, whatever his length of service and his experience might be, could never hope to rank equal with the most junior British officer.

This fact does not cause any apparent resentment or discontent among the holders of the Viceroy's Commission. They are men who, with few exceptions, have risen from the ranks. Their educational standard is low ; they are weak in initiative and do not assume responsibility easily. At the same time they worthily uphold the honour of their order ; they are brave ; they have a strong "esprit de corps," the Crown possesses no more loyal servants. A fine feeling of mutual trust and respect exists between them and their British officers. But it was impossible to shut one's eyes to the contrast which the position of Indians on the civil side presented. Short of becoming Viceroy, there are no positions closed to the civil official of Indian nationality. He is eligible to be the governor of a province, a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, a High Court judge, and to hold the highest appointments in the Indian Civil Service.

The conditions which exist in India are peculiar, for, as already mentioned, the personnel of the Army is not drawn, as in Western countries, from among the manhood of the whole nation, but from a circumscribed section which contains the martial class and which, though inferior in intellectual and educational attainments to the civil element, nevertheless considers itself immeasurably superior to it in other respects and is somewhat contemptuous of the lawyers and those who live by the pen. The magnificent performances of the Indian Army in France, Mesopotamia, Palestine and elsewhere had given rise to a growing feeling that some more substantial and significant form of recognition was due to it than what was conveyed by the customary military recompense and rewards.

This feeling first found official expression in a speech made by Lord Chelmsford to the Imperial Legislative Council at the end of the first year of his Viceroyalty. He said, "We put before ourselves three main tasks. Firstly, to secure that the services of the Indian Army should not go unrecognized or unrequited and that rewards to them should hold the foremost place. . . ."

Before leaving England, Sir Charles had discussed the subject of throwing open the King's commissioned ranks to Indians with the Secretary of State for India and others. He had already recognized that both from the point of view of India's political advancement as well as from the obligation of recognizing in an appropriate form the loyalty and gallantry which the army had displayed, and still was displaying, it was not equitable to delay the grant of this concession.

It cannot be claimed that the new Commander-in-Chief was the first person to realize that the time had come for opening out a wider career for the Indian soldier, but he recognized it directly he turned his eyes from the battle-fields of France towards the plains of Hindustan, and to him fell the task of transforming the thought into a reality. A commencement was made on August 5th, 1917, when the King-Emperor was pleased to appoint nine Indian officers to British Commissions.

It happens that the main stream of an idea sometimes splits up into several smaller channels and sometimes it shifts its course altogether. As has been seen, the foremost, if not the only, idea at first of granting King's Commissions to Indians had its origin in the desire to express an adequate appreciation of the services of the Indian Army in the Great War. To this end it was proposed to award King's Commissions (1) to specially capable and deserving Indian officers or non-commissioned officers of Indian regiments, (2) to Indian officers (Viceroy's Commission) who had rendered distinguished service.

It soon became evident that this proposal would not work in practice. The Indian Officer (Viceroy's Commission) when he received the King's Commission had, in all but exceptional cases, reached an age much greater than that of a second lieutenant who receives his commission directly he enters the army by one of the ordinary channels. His educational standard also was too low to enable him to pass the necessary tests for further promotion. The King's Commission, therefore, afforded him no career. Apart from the honour it conferred upon him he was generally better off in his old position.

From this it followed that the bestowal of King's Commissions has eventually become a means whereby the natural aspirations

of Indian political opinion may be satisfied rather than a reward for military services. The principal path of entrance leads through the military establishments in England. Meanwhile the other path has not been closed and is principally confined to the grant of Honorary King's Commissions to particularly deserving officers who hold the Viceroy's Commission.

When introducing the scheme, as finally approved, to the notice of the Army General Monro laid stress on the fact that the services rendered by the Indian Army during the War were factors that had contributed to accelerate the grant of a privilege long overdue. He pointed out that a career in the Army, without any limitation, was now thrown open to Indians of those classes from which the Indian Army is ordinarily recruited. He expressed his confidence in "the British officers' sense of duty, honour and fair play to secure the success of this new departure," and impressed on all British officers the necessity for bearing in mind that the honour of the King's Commission must be zealously safeguarded, whoever the possessor of it might be. "Any slight to it," he said, "because it is borne by an Indian—such, for instance, as black-balling him for a club on this ground—should be resented as a slight to the Army."

There are certain points in the Commander-in-Chief's remarks which are worth noticing in respect to subsequent developments. One is that the idea of reserving commissions for Indians "belonging to those classes from which the Indian is ordinarily recruited" is not strictly maintained in the minds of the Indians themselves; nor is it one which Government could well insist upon without laying itself open to a charge of wilfully impeding the aspirations of the non-martial races in their desire to develop a military instinct. Not all the Indians, therefore, who present themselves as candidates for Sandhurst come from the martial races, and there are many who fail to pass the selection tests. Moreover all those who succeed in getting into the Royal Military College do not all succeed in obtaining commissions. Up to the end of the year 1928 there were 112 admissions to the College and only seventy-seven of these received commissions.

A considerable number of the non-military classes who possess ample pecuniary means, but who have not hitherto exhibited any martial ardour, have evinced a desire to place their sons in a profession where the outward and visible signs of honour in the shape of rank and decorations may come as a gift of the gods to those who renounce the occupation of money-making in favour of the rough life of the soldier. As an Indian clerk once said to the writer, "I want my son to be an Army officer where he can

become a Captain and perhaps a Major and wear several decorations, and not to be a babu like myself. 'Damned fool' and 'silly idiot' are the only distinctions that are ever bestowed on a babu."<sup>1</sup>

Both the number and the quality of the candidates presenting themselves for admission to the Royal Military College show signs of improving. But there is a tremendous distance in time to be got through before India will be able to provide a sufficient number of officers drawn from among her own diverse nationalities, to meet the requirements of an *efficient* national army, without which she can never hope to obtain absolute self-government. Whatever the outcome may be, Sir Charles Monro, with the encouragement and support of the Viceroy, turned the key and put the door ajar in 1917. In 1918 he set it wide open that all who are chosen may enter.

Another point for notice is that which is contained in the admonition regarding the exclusion of Indian King's Commissioned Officers from clubs. Sir Charles Monro's view, which is also the official and to a large extent the Army view, that the exclusion from the local English club of an Indian officer wearing the King's uniform, who is associated with his British comrades in work, in games and in the mess, would be nothing short of an insult to the officer concerned and to the service to which he belonged. It would certainly seem most invidious that an officer who, for example, has played with his fellow British officers in the regimental polo team, should be debarred from entering, along with them, the club to which they resort at the conclusion of the game, simply because he is an Indian. Such a situation would be unpleasant for all concerned. Many a commanding officer would forbid all his officers to belong to a club from which any one of their number was excluded by reason of a colour bar.

Unfortunately this question is complicated by having another side to it. Those who are opposed to the admission of Indian officers to clubs say "Where is this to stop? If army Indian officers are admitted we cannot logically keep out civil Indian officials. We formed these clubs in order to have some place where we can meet the men and women of our race after the heat and burden of the day, where we can sing a song of Zion albeit we are in a strange land. As Indianization proceeds our clubs will be swamped by Indians. In time they will obtain the virtual control of these institutions which we made and paid for. The

<sup>1</sup> When the Indian Sandhurst comes into being the proportion of cadets belonging to the non-martial races is likely to be considerable—a fact which will inevitably prove detrimental to the Army, in course of time.



SIR CHARLES MONRO AND THE AUTHOR AT FIRST ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 1916



object for which they were designed is being lost sight of. Although we are always pleased to meet Indians socially, and count many of them among our personal friends and are glad to receive them in our houses, we object to having them forced on us by official pressure. Their social customs differ from ours in many ways.

"Because we exclude individuals from our clubs at home who do not possess the necessary qualifications, there is no slur implied either as to their character or their social standing, and it ought to be the same here." It must be admitted that there is much in this argument which cannot be gainsaid. The problem is an illuminating example of the obstacles which block the path of unrestricted intercourse when East meets West.

There has always been a tendency towards over-centralization in the departments of the Government of India, both in the conduct of their secretarial work and in the control which they exercise over the services administered by them. The Headquarters departments of the Army in India have not succeeded in keeping themselves free from this defect.

In 1894 the old Presidency armies were abolished and India was divided into the four commands of Punjab, Bengal, Madras and Bombay, each having its own army and departmental staffs. Lord Kitchener, when Commander-in-Chief, reduced the commands to three, namely the Northern, Western and Eastern. In 1908 he effected a further reduction and divided the army between two commands, the Northern consisting of the Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Lahore, Meerut and Lucknow divisions and the Kohat, Bannu and Derajat brigades and the Southern consisting of the Quetta, Mhow, Poona, Secunderabad and Burma divisions. Each army was commanded by a general officer who was responsible for the training of his troops and their fighting efficiency, but who had no administrative powers, all administrative work being concentrated at Army Headquarters.

Experience has shown that, both in peace and war, the responsibility for training and fighting cannot be successfully divorced from administrative responsibility. Lord Kitchener's reductions were made with the object of diverting the money saved on the maintenance of two command headquarters to other purposes supposed to be more beneficial to the army. Financial considerations must often be the ruling factor in any scheme of organization, but when they are allowed to override a principle, loss of efficiency is bound to occur somewhere, sooner or later.

This violation of the principle of decentralization which lies at the root of all sound organization, led to congestion and



endless delays and a burden of clerical work which caused much dissatisfaction among the subordinate formations. "Army Headquarters dealing direct with divisions, was burdened with the considerations of minor administrative detail; divisional commanders were similarly burdened with administrative work to the detriment of training for war; no provision had been made for the command or administration of internal security area troops after the departure of the field army on field service; and on mobilization, therefore, no machinery existed to ensure continuity of normal military administration in India itself."<sup>1</sup> The system was radically wrong and unsuited to the conduct of a great war.

Already, whilst in England prior to sailing for India, Sir Charles had been turning over in his mind certain ideas having for their object the reassertion of the principle of decentralization. These finally took shape in plans for (1) the extension of the power and responsibility of the Adjutant General and Quartermaster General, (2) the reintroduction of the Army Commands which had been in abeyance since the commencement of the War, and the restoration to them of the administrative functions which Lord Kitchener had taken away from them.

We find him writing to the Viceroy on December 4th, 1916: "All of us are in agreement that there is over-centralization of business at Headquarters, and that when time and funds are available a more logical system must be devised, whereby subordinate commanders will be educated to assume administrative and executive control over their troops, and will be judged by the results they attain in attempting to do so. . . . The Adjutant General and Quartermaster General have been sadly neglected and . . . I propose raising the status of these officers. . . . Associated with this problem (i.e., the reorganization of Army Headquarters) is the question of reintroducing the two armies started by Lord Kitchener; it would be better to have four, but we cannot manage it now; but if we start with two and give the general officers commanding a major general in charge of administration, we will get a system of inspection and instruction started which is badly needed. I would not propose to hand over any administrative powers to the army commanders so long as the War lasts. It would be dangerous at a time when we have so many campaigns to control to make any changes in the method by which business is conducted at this time."

Sir Charles Monro was never the victim of the "ignis fatuus" which leads many a possessor of a vivid imagination into the

<sup>1</sup> *The Army in India and its evolution.*

mire ; nor one of those who, when they conceive an idea, rush to put it into execution without giving a thought to its consequences.

There had been deplorable failures in connection with the administrative services during the first phase of the Mesopotamian campaign. Having these in his mind the Secretary of State had suggested to General Monro the advisability of creating an appointment of Chief Administrative Staff Officer, a sort of opposite number to the Chief of the General Staff, who would co-ordinate the work of Adjutant General's and Quartermaster General's departments and be responsible under the Commander-in-Chief for their efficient working.

Sir Charles did not see in this proposal any remedy for the miscarriage in Mesopotamia or a guard against their recurrence. At the same time he was ready to keep an open mind on the subject. "A man competent to get a full grip of Adjutant General's and Quartermaster General's work, besides hospitals and factories, military works, etc., would be no ordinary individual. We have not had such an official before, and although this is no proof that his inclusion would not be a great boon, I think we might think out the position for some time longer yet."<sup>1</sup>

— Much of what went awry in Mesopotamia may be traced to another cause than lack of co-ordination between the work of the principal departments at Army Headquarters. Not only had India not been engaged in any war on a large scale for many years, not only had she not visualized the possibility of such a war, but a succession of small military expeditions against the comparatively ill-armed and undisciplined tribes on her frontier had contracted her outlook in military matters. The result was that both tactically and administratively the majority of her officers were wanting in the faculty for handling and administering large bodies of troops, or of anticipating requirements and losses on a large scale.

It is not easy when one's vision has been limited during a large number of years to looking at the objects in a room suddenly to accustom it to the range of a whole countryside. Hitherto the posts of Adjutant General and Quartermaster General in India had been held by officers of the rank of colonel or major general. It was General Monro's opinion that all that was required was to raise the status and influence of these two departments by placing them under officers of a higher rank.

Accordingly, in 1917, the status of the two appointments was raised to that of Lieutenant General. Lieutenant General Sir

<sup>1</sup> Letter to the Viceroy dated December 12th, 1916.

Havelock Hudson and Lieutenant General Sir Edward Altham were the two first officers to fill the respective posts of Adjutant General and Quartermaster General, the former coming from the command of a division in France, the latter from being Chief Administrative officer in Gallipoli and Egypt. These appointments are now generally held by officers who have completed a tour of command in a first class district and who by their experience and authority are in a position to relieve the Commander-in-Chief of a very large amount of work which up to this time had been concentrated in his hands.

It is probable that these two steps towards a greater measure of decentralization in training and administration, namely the improvement in the status and responsibilities of the Adjutant General and Quartermaster General's departments, and the creation of the four commands, would have been made in any case, sooner or later, for the War had done much to clear the military body of India of the toxins of over-centralization and short-sightedness. But they would not have been taken until considerably later had it not been for General Monro's rapid diagnosis of the malady and his early application of the appropriate remedies.

The Northern and Southern Commands were resuscitated and provided with administrative as well as general staffs in 1917, and in 1920 a further reorganization took place whereby the Army in India was formed into four Commands, Northern, Southern, Eastern and Western, and the idea expressed by Sir Charles by his letter of December 4th, 1916, to the Viceroy became an actual fact. The General Officer Commanding in Chief in each command is responsible for command, training, administration and discipline of all troops within his area, and for the internal security schemes. He is provided with general, administrative and departmental staffs and his financial powers have been enlarged. The natural consequences of this organization are :

- (1) That a very large portion of the work with which Army Headquarters used to be overburdened is off-loaded on the Commands.

- (2) The Commands being in closer touch with the troops than Army Headquarters could be, the work which has been handed over to them is more expeditiously and satisfactorily performed.

- (3) For the same reason of being in closer contact with subordinate formations, Commands are better situated to know what is best for the welfare of the troops and for their training and discipline.

(4) It is a military axiom that no authority can deal satisfactorily with more than four to six subordinate commands. In the absence of the command system Army Headquarters had to deal with twelve or more.

A pernicious effect of the over-concentration of work at Army Headquarters was that which tied the Commander-in-Chief and his principal staff officers to their offices, or, to put it more correctly, which led them sometimes to believe that they were tied to their offices, for it was largely a matter of personal characteristics and habit. From the commencement of the War Sir Beauchamp Duff had never left Army Headquarters, not even to visit Bombay, which was the base of all the expeditionary forces which were despatched from India. The tours made by his Adjutant General and Quartermaster General during the same period had been short and rare. This was not entirely the fault of the Commander-in-Chief; it was partly due to the Viceroy who was extremely averse to letting Sir Beauchamp Duff out of his sight. Lord Hardinge feared that he might be left, in an emergency, without competent or authoritative advice. Sir Beauchamp Duff's long office career, which had developed a natural inclination to do with his own hands much clerical and detailed work which should have been left to his staff, combined with Lord Hardinge's timidity completely immobilized the Commander-in-Chief and, to a large extent, his staff as well.

It was an open secret at the time that complete absorption in office work was largely responsible for the continuation, as it was also in part at least the cause, of the breakdown in Mesopotamia in the first period of the War. Lord Chelmsford had a better conception than Lord Hardinge of the duties of a Commander-in-Chief.

Shortly after Sir Charles' arrival, the Viceroy wrote, on November 25th, 1916, expressing a hope that the Commander-in-Chief would find it possible to devote more attention to inspection work than his predecessor had done. In his reply Sir Charles said that his short experience did not endorse the contention that the Commander-in-Chief was chained to his office by pressure of work.

"I visited Mesopotamia, Bombay and other stations before reaching Headquarters and the machine worked quite smoothly. I intend going away next week on a visit to the Frontier, and before the end of the cold weather I shall have visited at any rate a large proportion of the troops in the north of India; and so far as I can see, there does not appear to be any reason why I should not do so. Since my arrival at Headquarters about

three weeks ago, I have, in addition, sent the Adjutant General, the Quartermaster General and the Director of Medical Services on tours of inspection."

The Viceroy forwarded General Monro's views to the Secretary of State with the following comments:

"I enclose also a letter from the Commander-in-Chief dealing with the questions mentioned in your letters of October 10th and November 1st.

"I think you will agree that he brings a bluff commonsense to bear on these, and my own personal feeling is that I should like to give a trial to his experiment of improving the position of the Adjutant General and the Quartermaster General before going into any root and branch reform. I was always doubtful of the necessity for the Commander-in-Chief to remain tied to his office at Army Headquarters and you can see from Monro's letter that he sees no difficulty in getting away; and if he has responsible men in the posts of Chief of General Staff, Adjutant General and Quartermaster General, he will be able to go on tour with his mind at ease. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Inspections are the most important duty of a military commander in peace or when not engaged in actual operations against an enemy. They enable him to observe at first hand, to see with his own eyes, to advise, to remedy, to explain his views and requirements. More than all this, they are for the real leader a channel for inspiration. His capacity for leadership may be largely gauged by the extent and durability of the vivifying influence which is communicated by the force of his personality. Monro possessed this gift of impressing his personality on those he inspected in an exceptional degree. This may have been due partly to the fact that no one knew and understood the British soldier better than he did, and this understanding was never weakened as time brought increasing distance in rank. He was always, in the words of Sir Charles Napier, "hand in glove with his men." They felt that he knew and understood them, and he inspired in them that confidence that rises to the enthusiasm which men have for a trusted leader, when they are faced with the hard changes and chances of War.

<sup>1</sup> Extract from letter from Lord Chelmsford to Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Secretary of State for India, dated December 12th, 1916.

## CHAPTER IX

The Recruiting problem. Co-operation between the Civil and Military. Demand for more men to meet requirements of Mesopotamia and other spheres. Free rations for Indian troops. The Central Recruiting Board. Supply of officers for Indian Army. Expansion of Indian Army Reserve of Officers. Recruitments. Demand for medical officers and personnel. Expansion of railway. Inland Water Transport. Ordnance and other technical services. Raising of Mechanical Transport Units. Labour Corps. The Black Book. The Munitions Board.

SIR CHARLES MONRO had been taken from the command of an army in France and appointed to the chief command in India because it was felt to be essential, in order to get the best out of the potential war material existing in India, in men and munitions, to have there a soldier who had first-hand knowledge of the requirements of modern war, whose mental outlook was unimpaired by long years of concentration on purely Indian problems and who, by the decision and inflexibility of purpose shown by him at Gallipoli, had gained the confidence both of the Cabinet and of the public.

India, as we have seen, had to maintain in the field the expeditionary forces she had sent to France, East Africa, Salonika, Aden, Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf, and later, Palestine. By the end of 1915 the Mesopotamian force had expanded from a single division to over fifty thousand fighting men. Casualties were very heavy and if success was to be obtained it was imperative to keep the ranks filled up.

Lord Chelmsford, in the course of a speech delivered to the Imperial Legislative Council in the winter of 1916-17, said: "Three stages seem clearly to stand out in India's contribution to the War. The first was that in which India threw all she had and far more than had ever been contemplated, into the great struggle. The second was the inevitable breakdown, due in part to the exhaustion of her military resources and in part to adverse fortune. The third was the patient building up again of forces and material which ultimately made possible the triumphs in Mesopotamia, Palestine and East Africa."

Lord Chelmsford arrived in India when the first stage had passed into the second, and "his administration may well take

pride in the fact that it was their exertions and their perseverance which made possible the passage of the second stage of depression, chaos and despair into the third stage of renewed vigour, energy and hope."<sup>1</sup> As executive head of the Army, Sir Charles Monro played the leading part in the third act of the military side of the drama. The supply of recruits and reinforcements and of munitions derived from India's own resources were the subjects which called for his attention before all others.

The recruiting problem in India has complications such as are not found elsewhere. Recruiting, instead of being spread over the whole country, is confined to certain areas which are inhabited by what are known as the martial races. Again, in these particular areas not all the classes are drawn upon; certain grades and classes are tabooed. Furthermore, enlistment cannot be for general service, as with us, where English, Scotch, Welsh, Irish, Canadian and Australian can all serve together in the same company without friction and without aloofness.

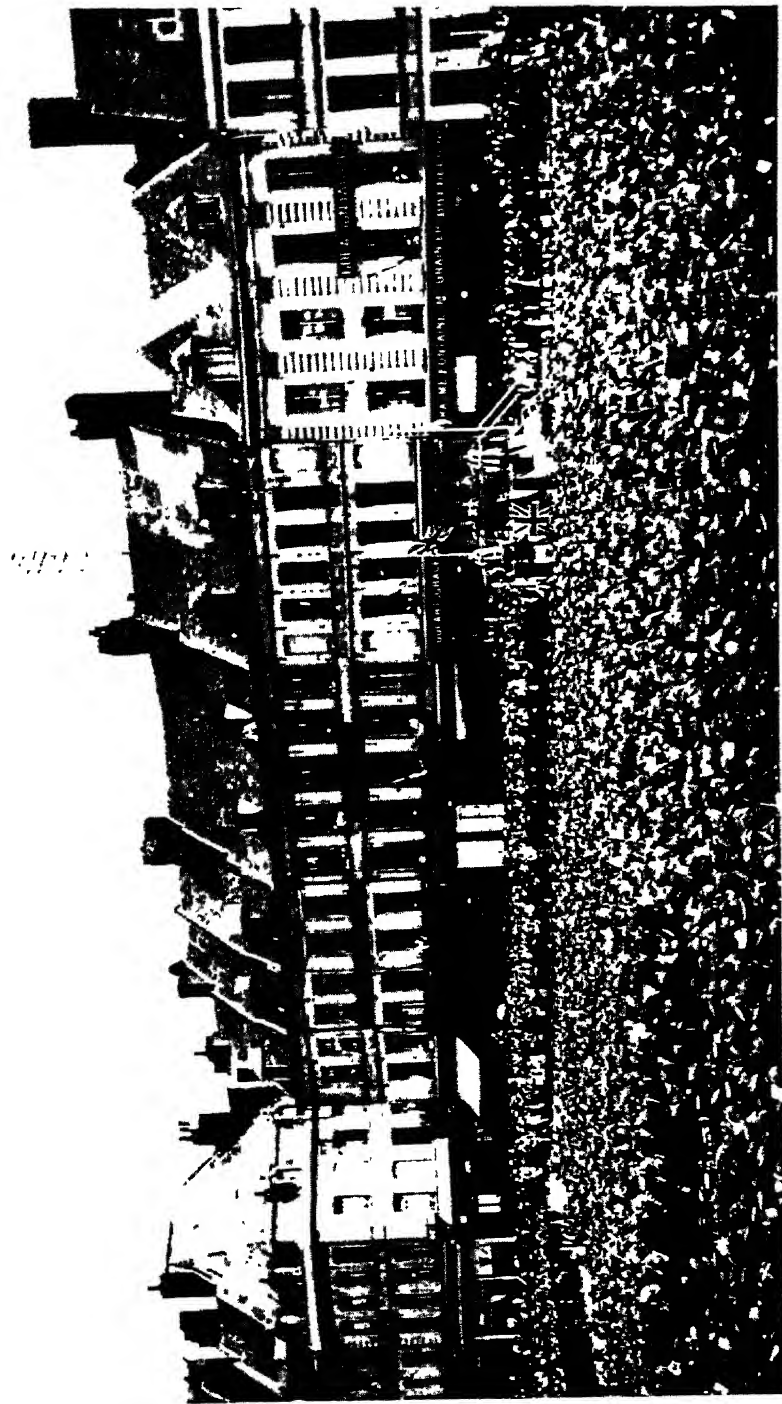
In India certain classes enlist in certain units only; they cannot serve in others. There are several obstacles, all inter-related, which block the path of India's constitutional progress, which cannot be overcome by words alone and which must be removed or surmounted before a genuine Dominion status can be reached. One of these obstacles is observable in the composition of the rank and file of the Indian Army, which consists of ingredients that refuse to mix, however hard they may be shaken together. It is a fact which has hitherto been conveniently ignored in most of the discussions which have taken place regarding the future constitution of India.

Previous to General Monro's arrival recruitment had been conducted on the pre-War system. Recruiting officers were appointed for the different classes and enlistment was carried on independently of the civil administration. This system, which had several disadvantages, worked fairly well in peace time and with an army of limited size<sup>2</sup> but was not able to cope with the demands of the Great War. By the end of 1916 the Mesopotamian Force had risen to a strength of 120,000 men, and the Army in India consisted of 79,000 British and 177,500 Indian ranks. The normal wastage of the Mesopotamian Force was 2,300 men and of the army in India 3,500 men a month. Some 11,750 fighting men

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Administration of Lord Chelmsford, Viceroy and Governor General of India, 1916-21.

<sup>2</sup> On the outbreak of war, the combatant strength of the Indian Army, including ~~auxiliary~~ <sup>auxiliaries</sup>, was 194,000 Indian ranks.

The annual intake of recruits for the army during the years preceding the Great War was 14,000.



PARADE SERVICE IN THE SQUARE, BÉTHUNE, 1916  
*The Square was heavily shelled by Germans on the following morning.*





and 8,250 followers were required every month to replace the wastage occurring in all the theatres where Indian expeditionary forces were employed.

Sir Charles Monro soon set about to alter this old system. He placed recruitment on a territorial basis, and officers were appointed to recruit by areas instead of by classes, working in close co-operation with the civil administration.

That there had been something wanting in this matter of co-operation between the civil and military, previous to Sir Charles' appearance, and that the way was made plain as soon as the trouble was brought to his notice, is apparent in the following letter from Lord Chelmsford to the Secretary of State, dated August 28th, 1917: "A year ago I felt some concern over the relations between the civil and military authorities as regards the recruiting arrangements, and I invited Sir Michael O'Dwyer to give me his views. He did so in a memo which I forwarded to your predecessor and at the same time asked the new Commander-in-Chief to examine. The results of the consideration given to O'Dwyer's suggestions have been most gratifying and he has now written a note expressing his complete satisfaction with the reforms instituted by Army Headquarters. I think it well that you should see his note in case belated complaints reach you of want of co-operation between the civil and military authorities."

In the note referred to, dated July 28th, 1917, Sir Michael O'Dwyer said: "My note of September 6th, 1916, which was written at the instance of higher authority, pointed out certain matters (regarding co-operation of military forces with the civil authority, interchange of information in matters of common interest, recruiting for the army and military transport arrangements) in which freer intercommunication and close co-operation between the military and civil authorities seemed to be desirable in the interests of the administration generally.

"It is not improbable that, had a similar survey of the situation been made by the military authorities, similar suggestions for more helpful co-operation from the civil government and its local officers would have been forthcoming. Both authorities after the outbreak of the War had to deal with a novel situation containing many serious and difficult features and it was only to be expected that there should at the start be some want of co-ordination which only experience could rectify. . . . I have great satisfaction in now putting it on record that practically all the matters brought to notice have been promptly and adequately settled by the military authorities either directly or in communi-

cation with the Punjab Government. Indeed I have to thank most heartily the Army Department for the courtesy and consideration shown in dealing with suggestions . . . from the Punjab Government in matters where the civil and military authorities are inter-connected.

"The cordial co-operation of the Army Department in all branches has not only secured smooth working in regard to the points noted in my memorandum of September 6th, 1916, but is of the most material assistance to this Government in the task of endeavouring to raise in the province the great quota of combatants required within the next year. Close co-operation and harmonious working are now fully established not only at Headquarters but also between the local civil and military officers."

As time went on the hungry cry of the War for men, and yet more men, was insistent, and India did not escape the requisition. It was a demand which under a voluntary system of enlistment became increasingly difficult to meet, but could not be ignored. By the close of 1917 the expeditionary force in Mesopotamia had risen to a strength of four hundred and twenty thousand men (including followers) and, as will be seen later, there were many other calls on Indian man power. Special inducements were therefore required to prevail upon recruits to come forward in sufficient numbers.

Up to this time it had been the custom in the Indian Army for the men to pay for their own rations. It was a bad plan, for men often underfed themselves in order to be able to send more money to their homes. Sir Charles Monro considered that one of the most effective attractions to the Army would be the offer of a free Government ration. Telegraphing to the Viceroy on November 18th, 1916, he says: "The recruiting market has shown considerable stagnation during the last two months. This, among other causes, is in great measure due to abundant agricultural prospects. I am of opinion that, to stimulate recruiting, substantial inducements must be offered at once. . . . I think we shall not make progress in recruiting here unless we make a commencement by offering free rations to all soldiers of the Indian Army. The question of increase of batta and pension can be taken up separately, but the free rations I regard as essential, and official proposals are now being formulated. . . . I think we should act with as little delay as possible and that is why I have addressed this telegram to Your Excellency."

The Viceroy replied the following day with a request that the case might be prepared for consideration in Council the very next week. The measure was promptly put through, free rations were

sanctioned for the Indian army and the antiquated system whereby the men found for themselves was abolished for ever.

In order to strengthen and control the machinery for recruitment a Central Recruiting Board, a combined civil and military organization, was formed, under the presidency of Sir William Meyer, which had for its purpose :

(1) To consider the requirements in military personnel of every description, combatant and non-combatant, and how these requirements could best be met.

(2) To consider how the quotas required could best be distributed among the several provinces.

(3) To co-ordinate all recruiting so as to ensure that the demands for military services conflicted as little as possible with essential industrial and economic requirements.

(4) To scrutinize the progress of recruiting and to consider schemes for meeting necessary and potential demands for recruitment."

" Recruiting is doing well. We took 20,800 men for the month of July, a very good figure bearing in mind that our normal monthly enlistment before the War averaged about 1,200, and I am hopeful that in subsequent months this figure will be considerably increased.

" We found at Headquarters some months ago that the recruiting problem had grown beyond the power of the Adjutant General to control ; we, therefore, through the Government of India, formed a Central Recruiting Board. This Board can correspond with more authority with local governments and can direct them as to the course they should pursue to stimulate recruiting. The result is that all local governments have also their Boards, and soldiers and civilians are working together strenuously to expand our recruiting prospects.

" We must still stick to voluntary effort in India—to attempt compulsion would be very unwise in my judgment, so we must make the best of voluntary effort, and if by combination we can work up to thirty thousand recruits per month, this figure should prove a great Imperial asset. . . .

" To deal with this number of men we shall want more officers with knowledge of the language and men they will command, and this is a big question. . . . We have two schools for cadets and two for older officers. . . . We have taken over three thousand through the agency of the Indian Army Reserve of Officers alone, so we are moving along.

" We are now engaged in forming twenty-four additional battalions, and ancillary units and . . . when they are com-

pleted start twenty-one more. It means our having a large number of men at the dépôts, as we have increased the establishment of all battalions serving outside India from seven hundred and fifty to a thousand . . . and we try to have a thirty per cent. reserve to supply wastage in Mesopotamia and East Africa.”<sup>1</sup>

In spite of all that was being done to stimulate recruiting the authorities at home thought that more was possible. Their solicitations called forth the following letter from Sir Charles to the Viceroy on April 3rd, 1917 :

“ I am now preparing a draft in reply to the one which urged us to improve our recruiting methods and to raise an additional hundred thousand men. The provision of men to meet appeals from England has always been a matter to which we have devoted close attention, and for the past two months we have been gradually taking stock of our position on the supposition that we should create the undermentioned additional units :

Cavalry . . .	1½ regiments.
Mountain Artillery . . .	3 batteries.
Sappers and miners . . .	8 field companies.
Infantry . . .	23 battalions.

“ Our attention was closely directed to the recruiting position and we had arrived at the conclusion that we could not meet all our obligations without having recourse to further inducements. . . .

“ In my view the Government of India should always endeavour to anticipate possible situations and not to sit supine until the arrival of demands from England. . . . Considerable expansions (of the recruiting branch) have been carried into effect lately and I claim that we are fully in touch with the civil authorities in all places where the recruitment of men is a reasonable proposition for investigation.

“ I hardly think it can be realized what we are now doing in India in the nature of furnishing men for this War. We are supplying East Africa, Mesopotamia and Egypt ; we are finding twenty thousand labourers for France ; we have sent about one hundred and ten thousand labourers to Mesopotamia ; we have recently been asked for an unlimited number of limber men and wood-cutters and for eighteen thousand drivers and gunners for duty in France.

“ In addition to these somewhat high demands, I cannot conceive that we shall be able to provide one hundred thousand

<sup>1</sup> Extract from letter from Sir Charles Monro to Colonel Repington, dated August 15th, 1917.

men. The recruiting problem, moreover, carries with it other matters needing careful study. It involves the provision of officers, non-commissioned officers, accommodation, equipment, arms, medical attendance.

"The officer question is perhaps the most urgent. Officers doing duty with Indian units must be conversant with the language of the men they are to command and also with their habits and customs, and these essentials cannot be rapidly acquired. We are actively engaged in securing officers from all sources and training others, but our resources are not unlimited, and Mesopotamia in particular is proving a very heavy drain. Over one hundred Indian Army officers have been killed since the inception of Maude's fighting. . . ."

An addition to the numerical strength of an army is not the simple proceeding which it appears to be at first sight. Every hundred men added to the ranks means a hundred more rations daily, a hundred more rifles and ammunition for these, two hundred more pairs of boots, one hundred more sets of clothing and equipment, more accommodation, more doctors, more non-commissioned officers to train the new men, more officers to command them and to superintend the training.

In a national emergency the factories of a country can be adapted to provide most of these requirements and the rest may be procurable from outside sources. The officers and non-commissioned officers cannot be manufactured or obtained from elsewhere. In the Indian Army the difficulty of making good the war wastage in officers is greatly enhanced. In no other profession is the direct personal influence of command so important as it is in the profession of arms. The Indian soldier is not the representative of one nation as he is in the other armies of the world. He may be a Hindu or Mussulman; he may be a Sikh or Punjabi Muhammadan, or Jat, or Rajput, or Pathan or Ghurka, or Brahman, and each one differs from the other in creeds, custom, language, outlook and tradition. The British officer of the Indian Army has to know his men, whatever their race and religion may happen to be, and he has to know their language.

The Indian troops who in their villages had scarcely heard an echo of that mysterious "black" ocean which they now saw for the first time at Bombay, who were landed in a strange country amidst strange surroundings, who in the midst of an European winter and under a sunless sky were put to stand in the freezing mud of the Flanders trenches, in order to engage in a dire form of war differing from anything they had ever heard of or conceived, found their only salvation in that confidence in

their regimental officers which is the outcome of years of mutual trust and comradeship.

An eloquent tribute has been paid to these officers and one which gains additional worth from being written by one who himself was not a soldier. It says: "Among all the men of our race who contributed to India's effort in the Great War, the British officer of the Indian Army stands first and foremost. His helmet has reflected few gleams of glory, but it was he who in the long years before 1914 disciplined the ardour and inspired the confidence which moved the officers and men who followed him through many a hard-fought engagement. The officers and soldiers of the old Indian Army have largely vanished from the earth, but the memory of their self-sacrifice challenges Britain to guard the trust for which they gave their all."<sup>1</sup>

It is easy to understand how impossible it was to fill the vacancies caused by casualties in the officer ranks of the Indian Army by others who were comparable in respect of their competency for dealing with the rank and file. There were also other difficulties to contend with which did not exist in a like degree in Great Britain or the Dominions. One of these was the smallness of the British community in India and the fact that the greater number of the men who formed it were engaged in Government business from which they could not be spared. Another was due to the non-existence of any sort of reserve of officers to replace casualties.

As previously pointed out, the Army in India was never organized for any bigger undertaking than a second-class war, and the absence of an officer reserve was not the result of any shortness of foresight on the part of the Indian Government. Moreover, before a shot had been fired or a man had left India the Indian army lost the services of 253 officers out of an establishment of 2,586, who, being on leave in England at the outbreak of the War, were kept for employment under the War Office.

But whatever the difficulties might be in acquiring the men to fill the officer casualties, both as regards their numbers and their qualifications for commanding Indian soldiers, they had to be got, and that quickly. They were sought for down various channels.

The Indian Army Reserve, which in August, 1914, was composed of forty officers only, was expanded by 460 officers drawn from Government employment, and 4,941 from other sources, planters, business and commerce, etc. Cadet colleges were opened at

<sup>1</sup> Sir Verney Lovett, K.C.S.I., in *India—the Nations of To-day* series edited by John Buchan.

Quetta and Wellington and together with Sandhurst and Kingston in Canada supplied 1,186 officers. The War Office transferred to the Indian Army (on probation) 2,050 officers from the Special Reserve and Territorial Force. The total number of officers found during the War from all sources was 9,583, nearly four times the number of the strength at the outbreak of hostilities.

The recruitment of officers did not stop at the Indian Army. India also made her contribution towards the replacement of wastage in the British Army. Arrangements were made for the training of warrant officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the British service at Sialkot and Campbellpore, with a view to their receiving commissions in the British units serving in Mesopotamia and India. The total number of officers trained at the cadet colleges and at the officers' schools of instruction which were established at Ambala, Bangalore and Nasik, for the training of newly-commissioned officers promoted from the ranks, was 5,653. 2,537 ex-soldiers, civilians and volunteers were enlisted in India, and a small Anglo-Indian contingent was raised consisting of a battery, three signal troops and half a battalion of infantry.

The total number of men enlisted during the War was 683,000 combatant recruits and 414,000 non-combatant recruits—a total of 1,097,000. Of these, the Punjab provided 349,000 combatants and 97,000 non-combatants and the United Provinces 163,000 combatants and 117,500 non-combatants. Between them, therefore, these two provinces found three-fourths of the total number of combatant recruits raised throughout British India.

The Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province together furnished over fifty-five per cent. of the combatant recruits. It was natural that a larger proportion of fighting men should come out of these two provinces, inhabited as they are by men more virile and races more warlike than those who people the other portions of India. And they may be justly proud of the fact that out of their combined populations, amounting to twenty-two millions, they gave more men to fight for the Empire than the remaining two hundred and thirty millions in India were able to give.

In every movement an impulse must be given in order to start it and energy must be applied in order to continue it. In the Punjab the recruiting movement received its impulse and energy in the first instance from the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Michael O'Dwyer. To his personal influence, enthusiasm, courage and determination more than to any other individual effort are



attributable the wonderful results shown in the recruiting returns of the Punjab.

Besides the recruits enlisted in British India, 58,900 Gurkhas were obtained from Nepal<sup>1</sup> and 115,800 men were provided by the Indian States. The total recruitment in India during the War, combatants and non-combatants, amounted approximately to one million two hundred and seventy thousand men.

There were 378 Royal Engineer officers serving on the Indian establishment on the outbreak of the War, and of these 319 were surrendered for employment overseas with the various expeditionary forces or at the War Office. During the whole of the War these were replaced by 115 officers sent out from England, by thirty-six promotions from the ranks and 579 commissions given to engineers serving in India and who had joined the Indian Army Reserve, a total of 730 officers. Of these 430 were sent overseas.

The demand for medical officers and medical personnel to meet the necessities of the expeditionary forces and of the various training establishments and large number of recruits undergoing training in India was difficult to meet. There were 261 Indian Medical Service officers serving with the army at the commencement of the War. There are always large numbers of Indian Medical Service officers in civil employ, and 380 of these were returned to military service, fifty-eight were obtained by recruitment, 604 were obtained by the grant of temporary commissions to private practitioners and 352 temporary commissions were given to civil assistant and sub-assistant surgeons. The total obtained from these different sources was 1,394.

The establishment of military assistant and sub-assistant surgeons was raised from 1,229 to 1,855, an increase of 626. There were only about ninety nurses serving in the military hospitals in India in August, 1914. Local recruitment brought the number up to nine hundred, of which two hundred and twenty went overseas or for duty on hospital ships and four hundred were reserved for duty with Indian troops. Never before had Indian troops received the benefit of being nursed in sickness by

<sup>1</sup> Nepal gave great help to India during the Great War. Apart from the Gurkha recruits supplied to the Indian Army the late Maharajah Sir Chandra Shum Shere, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O., ever a staunch ally of the British, sent a contingent of 12,000 Nepalese troops, under the command of his son, General Sir Baber Shum Shere Jung, Bahadur Rana, G.B.E., K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E. to assist in garrison duties in India. General Sir Baber Shum Shere remained at A.H.Q., in the capacity of Inspector General, Nepalese Contingent, from March, 1915, to February, 1919, during which time he rendered valuable assistance to the Commander-in-Chief. He also took part in the operations on the N.W. Frontier.



THE HON. LADY MONRO, D.B.E.



trained lady-nurses. The innovation has proved a marked success and has been continued in the Indian military hospitals up to the present time.

Many lady practitioners came forward in 1917 and volunteered for duty in hospitals in order to fill the place of medical officers who had gone to accompany the troops. The staff of one large War hospital in Bombay was, with the exception of the commanding officer and the registrar, composed entirely of lady doctors. In response to an appeal made by the Commander-in-Chief, ladies from all parts of India volunteered for service as Aid Detachment Nurses.

The Army Bearer Corps which on the outbreak of the War numbered 3,250 was expanded to a strength of 22,750, i.e. to seven times its pre-War strength.

Altogether the medical personnel sent overseas was composed of 1,069 officers of the Indian Medical Services, 1,200 Nursing Sisters, 2,142 assistant surgeons, 3,653 other ranks and 26,179 followers.

Railways, military works, inland water transport, ordnance and other services of a technical nature all called for expansion and a constant supply of men. From the date when Sir Charles Monro took over the command in 1916 to the end of the War, nearly 150,000 men of all classes, representing a monthly average of 5,000, were sent overseas. Of these the railways absorbed 67,000, the inland water transport 56,000, works and other services 27,000. These men required to be trained before they could be of any use and consequently five large military labour training camps were formed through which were passed over 114,600 men, and schools were established for the training of railway signallers, assistant stationmasters, motor tractor drivers, oil engine drivers, motor-boat drivers, ice mechanics, soda water mechanics and clerks.

Certain mechanical transport units were raised, viz. five Ford van companies for Mesopotamia; three mechanical transport sections for Aden, the South Persian Rifles and Bushire; a Ford van company, a lorry section and a motor ambulance convoy for East Persia, and five mechanical transport companies and an advanced repair workshop for India. The personnel for these numbered seventy-three officers, 2,821 other ranks. A mechanical transport training school was established at Rawalpindi, from which 2,113 drivers were sent overseas.

There was a heavy demand from overseas for labourers, porters, syces, bakers, blacksmiths, butchers, carpenters, cooks, hammer-men, gardeners, herdsmen, shoemakers, shoeing-smiths, packers,

sweepers, tailors, washermen and weighmen. One hundred and four labour corps were formed, each 1,150 strong; thirteen porter corps, each 576 strong; fifteen syce companies, each 210 strong. As the men enrolled in these corps for limited periods of six, nine or twelve months, practically the whole of the personnel of each corps required replacement every year. Five dépôts for followers and one for syces were established. The number of men passed through these dépôts was 107,500.

The personnel of the Supply and Transport Department which served overseas was 717 officers, 1,602 British warrant and non-commissioned officers, 14,000 Indian supply personnel and 61,000 Indian transport personnel.

Eighteen field veterinary sections, four mobile veterinary sections and three base dépôts of veterinary stores with sixty-eight veterinary officers and ninety-seven veterinary assistants went overseas.

The Indian Post Offices provided 4,000 men for duty in the field; 8,300 men, of which 1,200 were trained to be telegraphists, did duty with the field telegraphs.

Coming to the animals, over 40,000 were sent to France, over 100,000 to Mesopotamia, over 18,000 to Egypt and over 12,000 to other theatres. Taking them by classes, the round numbers were, 86,000 horses, 65,300 mules, 10,700 camels, 5,000 draught bullocks, 5,600 dairy cattle. The actual number of animals shipped were 172,815.

The number of men of all ranks, British and Indian, who were embarked at the two ports of Bombay and Karachi during the War was 1,302,394.

The raising of recruits to provide new units and to make good the wastage in the fighting line in the theatres where Indian troops were engaged, the establishment of camps and schools of instruction and the provision of men for the ancillary services alone placed a heavy burden of care on the shoulders of Sir Charles Monro such as no other Commander-in-Chief has had to carry. But this only represented a fraction of the multifarious subjects which required his supervision.

It was his habit, as an Army Commander in France and in India, to make a note of everything which called for his personal attention or which seemed to him would conduce to increased efficiency or contribute to the welfare of the troops. He entered these notes in a book which was well-known to his principal staff officers by the name of "The Black Book."

The notes, of which there are four or five on a page, fill several volumes of the Black Book. They cover an extraordinary wide

range of subjects, great and small. They display Sir Charles' desire for enlightenment as to the progress and state of supplies, works and armaments incidental to the operations in Mesopotamia, Persia and Egypt. The production of small arms ammunition, the manufacture of aeroplanes in India and the speedier provision of khaki clothing; the improvement of sleeping accommodation on troop trains and the provision of tea-rooms for Indian soldiers at important railway stations and of tea-shops in their lines, the possibilities of manufacturing in India jam and biscuits for consumption in the United Kingdom, the state of the supply of rifles, the improvement in the pay of military clerks and their better accommodation, the intention to interview Indian candidates for King's Commissions, the acceleration of the construction of telephone lines to the frontier, plans to persuade troops to save their money and put it in the Post Office Savings Bank, the intention to consult the President of the Indian Munitions Board on certain matters of supply, and the Foreign Secretary on questions of policy in Persia, the establishment of furlough homes in the Hills, employment for wounded officers, recreation grounds, anxiety for the comfort of new British battalions coming to India, the abolition of brothels in cantonments, appeal to ladies not to drop their social services to the troops after the War—these are some of the hundreds of entries which the Black Book contains, and which are interspersed with the greater matters of high command.

Opening a volume at random we find the following consecutive entries :

" I must be told the condition of the frontier forts, the efficiency of the barbed wire, facilities for blinding loopholes, sandbags for improvising loopholes, searchlights, bombs, etc."

" Try to start a school temporarily in India to provide education for the children of officers' wives who are unable to get home."

" Has the Q.M.G. provided for the troops going to Bushire and Bandar Abbas, spine pads, goggles, etc. ? "

" The troops on the frontier, viz. the 1st, 2nd, 4th Divisions and the frontier brigades, must not be called upon to provide drafts for overseas, nor must they supply officers if possible."

" Speak to the Army Secretary about the policy we should adopt to start the station hospital system for Indian troops. The long delay must now be terminated."

" What progress is being made in recruiting for the Army Bearer Corps ? "

"The Q.M.G. must tell me what progress the Director of Remounts is making in his new system of organization devised so as to ensure a more rapid supply of animals of all kinds."

"It is said that there are rifles under repair in the arsenals which cannot be completed for three months. We must see to it that the time is shortened up."

"How many beds will be wanted in the hospitals at Bushire and Bandar Abbas. As a first instalment ask for electric installation and see to it also that ice plant in sufficient quantity is sent over without delay."

"Incompetent lady clerks must be turned out in spite of their social position. Unpunctuality, etc., must not be tolerated."

"We should start a medical school in the Southern Command as soon as possible."

And as an example of his never-failing consideration for others :

"There are a number of Australian nurses in Delhi now on leave before going back to Australia. Their pay is so small that they must have nothing left wherewith to enjoy themselves. I must try to get them travelling warrants and I must arrange that they are shown round Delhi and that the people here entertain them."

A red pencil remark at the end of each note shows the action taken in each case ; not one remains unanswered or with the purport unfulfilled.

These notes depict, as it were on an X-ray plate, the inner mind of Sir Charles Monro. The unmistakable marks shown thereon are those of comprehension, experience, foresight and the charity which never faileth in its thoughtfulness for the welfare of all down to the least of those who came within the orbit of his authority.

On March 1st, 1917, the Munitions Board was created under the Presidency of Sir Thomas Holland.<sup>1</sup> Its inception is due to Lord Chelmsford and Sir Charles Monro. India is not an industrial country. The workmen capable of manufacturing munitions of war do not exist outside the Government factories and arsenals. Moreover the average Indian workman does not readily take to new methods. He has a low educational standard. He possesses a primitive knowledge of his work which he has inherited from his forefathers and in which he evinces no desire to improve.

<sup>1</sup> Five months after the Munitions Board was founded Lord Chelmsford, in a speech to the Imperial Legislative Council, recorded his appreciation of Sir T. Holland's services as President of the Munitions Board in these words : "His drive, the unusual width of his scientific knowledge, his business capacity and industry have converted what might otherwise have been a futile experiment into a practical working success."

In his eyes, what was good enough for all the yesterdays is good enough for all the to-morrows.

For up-to-date workshop tools and much of the raw material used in munition making, India depends on outside assistance. The manufacture of munitions called for expert European supervision, and this was only forthcoming to a very limited extent. Much patient labour was required in order to obtain appreciable results. The results, when they did come, not only fully justified the formation of the Board; they compel admiration for the work of the President of the Board and all the officers responsible for its organization and for its output, as also for the foresight and confidence of its originator, the Commander-in-Chief, and its sponsor, the Viceroy.

It started to operate on April 1st, 1917, i.e. one month after its formation. Its chief functions were "to control and develop Indian industries with special reference to the needs created by the War, to regulate contracts, to limit and co-ordinate demands for articles not manufactured or produced in India, and to apply the manufacturing resources of India to war purposes, with the special object of reducing demands on shipping."

The Board took over the entire control of the Ordnance factories and the production and supply for war purposes of leather, railway material, clothing, textiles, boots, tents, jute goods, river-craft, timber and miscellaneous engineering plant and stores. It was also responsible for scrutinising the priority of application for goods from the United Kingdom and from America; the control of export of certain materials; the control of the distribution of the Indian iron and steel and cement works, of public dealings in certain engineering materials and of shipping repairs.

A recapitulation of the Board's activities would be wearisome and its output of a few articles only is given in order to convey some idea of the immensity and variety of India's contribution to the War in ways other than that of man-power. Between April 1st, 1915, and October 31st, 1918, the turnout of ball ammunition was 448 million rounds, of shells of all natures 1,246,500, of rifles 131,890, of sets of harness 19,300, of steel 57,600 tons. Of hides 2,175,670 cwts. were shipped to the United Kingdom and 877,330 cwts. to Italy. Of railway material, 1,855 miles of track, 229 locomotives, 5,990 vehicles, and 13,000 feet of bridging material were shipped to various theatres.

In 1915-16 the output of clothing rose to over three million garments, the total output to the end of the War amounting to nearly forty-two millions. Between July, 1917, and October,



1918, that is within a period of sixteen months, 2,200,000 pairs of boots were supplied ; 2,900 miles of cloth were provided for greatcoats, flannels and linings, 2,000,000 pairs of socks and mittens and nearly 2,000,000 blankets were also provided ; 74,300 miles of cotton goods were purchased from Indian manufacturers between July, 1917, and October, 1918 ; 2,500,000 kit-bags were manufactured.

A great number of bags for sugar, grain, and other articles made from jute were turned out, among them being 8,078,500 sandbags and 27,655 miles of rope. A large number of river-craft was constructed, principally for service in Mesopotamia. They consisted of barges, motor-boats, pontoons, steam launches, lighters and other types, amounting to 738 all told.

" Mesopotamia is, of course, an absorbing subject in India. We have already sent there 272 barges, 63 tugs, 273 craft of different kinds, and their number still increases. Besides, we provide all the material for railways, timber, etc., *ad lib.*, which is demanded. The skilled personnel required for railways, electric lights, ice machines, inland water transport, gardening, is a heavy tax on India.

" We have already sent considerably over 100,000 labourers there. It would astonish you to see the applications which reach us weekly for riveters, boilermdkers, engine drivers, station-masters, signalmen, etc., *ad infinitum*.

" We have started schools to eaucate the number of tradesmen asked for, but it will be a difficult matter to meet the demands we get in the future. As to the provision of rails, we have managed to procure silica bricks from a firm in India, and are consequently turning out rails in increasing proportion. All the rails we make, amounting to about 3,000 tons per month, we are sending to Egypt for the present. For Mesopotamia we pull up existing lines. All this work is under the auspices of Sir Thomas Holland, a most remarkable man, who is President of the Munitions Board.

" In many branches of industry very great progress is being made, particularly in tannery and textiles, which should be a great help to England. The chemical side also promises very well and if only we had adequate machinery in India a very great deal could be done. We are much hampered now by want of it.

" The force in Mesopotamia continues to expand and as it does so the development of the port of Basra becomes an urgent need. We hope now to be able to handle about 100,000 tons a month, but this will not long suffice, and we shall have to work

up to 130,000 tons. This means additional wharfage accommodation, barges and increased labour.

" P.S. Regarding the river-craft we have sent to Mesopotamia, the following will show you more clearly what has been done : 48 paddle steamers, 272 barges, 63 tugs, 135 motor launches. The balance comprises a variety of craft."<sup>1</sup>

The above figures give no more than a superficial representation of the work of the Munitions Board, both in respect of the variety and the quantity of the articles which it procured or caused to be purchased for the service of the Army, and which ranged from motor-cars and mobile kitchens to buttons and cotton thread ; from electrical power stations and cinematographs to hay and pumps. They suffice, however, to indicate the nature and extent of its activities.

These remarkable results could never have been obtained had not the Commander-in-Chief been fortunate in the support which he received not only from the members of the Recruiting and Munitions Boards, but also from an exceptionally brilliant staff of officers at Army Headquarters. Lieutenant General Sir George Kirkpatrick,<sup>2</sup> the Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant General Sir Havelock Hudson,<sup>3</sup> the Adjutant General, Lieutenant General Sir Edward Altham, the Quartermaster General, Major General A. H. Bingley,<sup>4</sup> the Army Secretary, and Major General T. E. Scott,<sup>5</sup> Military Secretary, were all men eminently fitted by reason of their experience, knowledge of India and the Indian army and their first-rate abilities to fill the posts they severally occupied.

When a war is in progress a soldier's heart is in the fighting front, wherever the rest of him may be. But these officers and their subordinates brought to their work a patriotism, a devotion to duty and to their chief which is unsurpassed. Without their help Sir Charles would have laboured but in vain.

Sir Thomas Holland, the President of the Munitions Board, when writing in June, 1919, to Sir Charles Monro to congratulate him on receiving the honour of Knight Grand Cross of the Bath said :

" Everyone within and without the army will be delighted at the recognition given on account of the way you have brought

<sup>1</sup> Extracts from letters from Sir Charles Monro to Colonel Repington, dated August 15th, 1917.

<sup>2</sup> Now General Sir George Kirkpatrick, K.C.B., K.C.S.I.

<sup>3</sup> Now General Sir Havelock Hudson, G.C.B., K.C.I.E.

<sup>4</sup> Now Lieutenant General Sir Alfred Bingley, K.C.I.E., C.B.

<sup>5</sup> Now Lieutenant General Sir Thomas Scott, K.C.B., C.I.E., D.S.O.

India safely through her troubles and restored her good name. I know that every officer in the Munitions Board would, like me, offer his humble but none the less sincere congratulations. I have, myself, more to offer and that is gratefulness for Your Excellency's unfailing confidence and trust during the past two years. Till you arrived I felt very depressed about India, but your arrival brought a breath of fresh air that encouraged everyone and saved the situation. . . ."

The work of the Commander-in-Chief in connection with the War was not confined to providing what may be called the raw material of the military forces, in the shape of officers, recruits, food, medical equipment, ordnance, stores, transport and the thousand necessities of an army in the field. The raw material had to be prepared, organized and apportioned to the overseas forces for the maintenance of which India was responsible, and according to the urgency of each case.

Sir Charles Monro had to keep a sleepless eye over the requirements and welfare of the troops in East Africa, Persia, Mesopotamia and Palestine while the uncertain situation on the North-West Frontier of India called for increasing watchfulness and internal defence claimed its share of attention.

---

## CHAPTER X

Mesopotamia. Control of operations by War Office. Views of C.I.G.S. and General Maude on strategical situations. Monro's opinion asked for. He arrives at Basra and inspects communications. Telegraphs his opinion to C.I.C.S. Sir William Robertson concurs. Maude expresses his satisfaction with Monro's visit.

THE operations in Mesopotamia had, at the commencement, been controlled by India with results which had proved far from satisfactory. It had, therefore, been settled early in 1916 that the control should be exercised by the War Office through the Commander-in-Chief in India. The chief provisions for this arrangement were :

(a) That the Commander-in-Chief would receive his instructions with regard to military operations from the Chief of the Imperial General Staff in the same manner as the Commanders-in-Chief in other theatres.

(b) That India would remain the main base of the force, which would continue to be administered by the Commander-in-Chief in India.

(c) That the C.I.G.S. and the Commander-in-Chief would correspond direct in regard to the requirements of the force in Mesopotamia, but all questions of principle or policy likely to affect the military or internal security of India or the political situations in Persia or the Gulf would continue to be referred by the Commander-in-Chief to the Viceroy.

Shortly after Sir Charles Monro's assumption of office these provisions were extended and the Commander-in-Chief became responsible to the Army Council instead of to the Government of India for the provision of personnel, supplies and material.

Before Sir Charles left England it had been arranged that he should visit Mesopotamia in order to acquaint himself with the situation there, prior to taking up his duties in India. On his way out he was met at Aden by Major General Skeen,<sup>1</sup> Director of Military Operations, Major General Richardson, the Deputy Adjutant General, and Colonel "Tommy" Scott, the Military

<sup>1</sup> Now General Sir Andrew Skeen, K.C.B., K.C.I.E.

Secretary, from Army Headquarters at Simla. He touched at Bombay and transhipped on October 10th, for Basra.

During his short stay at Bombay he was fully advised as to the Indian view of the Mesopotamia situation, and on other Indian military questions of importance, by General Kirkpatrick, the Chief of the General Staff, who had travelled down from Simla to meet him and who, Sir Beauchamp Duff having left for England, was in charge of Army Headquarters during the interim.

About the time that Sir Charles Monro departed for India there was considerable uncertainty and discussion in the War Committee concerning the plan of operations to be adopted in Mesopotamia. Was General Maude to advance on Baghdad, was he to stand where he was, or was he to withdraw temporarily to a position where an economy in troops could be effected and questions of supply and maintenance would be simplified?

The Chief of the Imperial General Staff with that practical insight, that knowledge born of a deep study of war which separates the essentials from the non-essentials, that intuition which puts the correct values on the practical and imaginative qualities in the art of generalship—qualities which when united in proper proportion lead to success, and when one or the other is absent, lead nowhere, or to disaster, was opposed to an immediate advance on Baghdad. He said, in substance, that while not putting an eventual advance on Baghdad out of the question, we had not at the time, nor for an indefinite period were we likely to have, the number of troops required to seize and hold the place, and that even if we had them, we could not hope for a long time to come, owing to long and difficult communications, to maintain them there.

. In a telegram to General Maude, on September 12th, 1916, he drew attention to the drain on our resources, to the bad climatic conditions and indifferent state of the communications, and pointed out that the present positions exercised no direct influence on Persia. For these reasons he asked General Maude to consider the advisability of a withdrawal to Ahwaz with the main forces while keeping a strong central reserve in the Basra-Nawaz area ready to operate north, east or west. This plan, he said, would safeguard the oilfields, command both rivers and make our power felt towards Shiraz and Isfahan and enable us to stop worrying about Persia.

General Maude replied that, if a passive attitude alone was required and no local considerations were involved, he agreed that the plan of the C.I.G.S. was very suitable. But he considered the advantages of the present position outweighed the

disadvantages. It menaced Baghdad and prevented the Turks from detailing troops to Persia. If we retired to Amara the tribes would be obliged to join the Turks and would attribute our withdrawal to weakness. Withdrawal to a stationary position would cause deterioration in the morale of our own troops. As to the climate, the nearer to the sea the unhealthier it became. Taking a more local view, as was natural, General Maude desired to advance on Baghdad provided he could sufficiently improve his communications.

The War Committee decided that General Monro's opinion should be sought after he had obtained the advantage of a personal inspection of the situation on the spot—a sign of the reliance which was placed on his judgment as a result of his Gallipoli decision. On September 30th, therefore, the C.I.G.S. sent the following telegram to General Maude, repeating it at the same time to India for the information of General Monro on his arrival.

"Prior to your departure from England we discussed possible necessity of withdrawing troops to a position somewhat lower down the Tigris. This necessity seemed to exist for several reasons. The chief of these are (a) defective communications and slow improvement of them; (b) inability usually alleged or implied by G.O.C. Force "D" to find detachments when occasionally and temporarily required for employment elsewhere . . . ; (c) although it is realized the force is indirectly doing more to secure Persia than merely holding up some twenty thousand Turks in the vicinity of Kut, we ought to derive greater value than we have hitherto from the large force employed. In other words, the force is sufficiently large to justify us in expecting it to carry out the following mission, which I am directed by the War Committee to communicate to you as being the instructions of His Majesty's Government, as decided on the 28th instant :

"The mission of the Mesopotamia Expeditionary Force is to protect the oil-fields and pipe-lines in the vicinity of the Karun river, to maintain our occupation and control of the Basra vilayet and to deny hostile access to the Persian Gulf and Southern Persia. . . .

"No fresh advance to Baghdad can at present be contemplated, but it is the desire of His Majesty's Government, if, and when possible, to establish British influence in the Baghdad vilayet. This further advance should not be undertaken unless and until sanction for it is given, but meanwhile the General Officer Commanding should continue to improve the river and railway communications and maintain as forward a position as the

state of his communications will allow, and as can be made secure tactically without incurring heavy loss, whether caused by the enemy or by climatic conditions.

"Military and political considerations connected with Nasariyeh, the Muntafik and Bani Lam tribes and the Busht-i-Kuh-Bakhtiari country suggest retention of our present positions, if this can be achieved without undue sacrifices, but we desire your views as to the feasibility of this course. You will no doubt consult Sir Percy Cox as to the effect on the Arabs of any withdrawal.

"Further, the Mesopotamia Expeditionary Force should ensure that hostile parties do not work down south across the line Shushtar-Isfahan. You must not expect to receive further reinforcements for the force. On the contrary, it may become necessary to withdraw the 13th Division which was sent to the country in order to assist in the attempted relief of Kut.

"His Majesty's Government, you will observe, wish the force to be kept as far forward as is feasible, and in this connection I wish you to understand that so far as I, personally, am concerned I leave the proposals as to the dispositions of the force entirely to your judgment. You will also observe that the responsibilities of the force extend to the Shushtar-Isfahan direction, but it is unlikely that this will make any material demand upon the force. You should also consider necessity of relieving some of the white battalions by battalions from India.

"Regarding feasibility of eventual advance in Baghdad direction, I have informed War Committee that in my opinion (a) we have not now, nor for an indefinite time are we likely to have, the number of troops required to seize and hold the place ; (b) we cannot hope for a long time to come, owing to long and difficult communications, to maintain them there even if we had them ; (c) their position at Baghdad would, in other respects, be, in a military sense, unfavourable and would have no decisive effect on the War, keeping in mind necessity for being as strong as possible in decisive theatre, especially next spring. Consider whole situation in all its aspects with Cox and Maude and report your proposals with special reference to any change in dispositions you deem necessary."

General Monro reached Basra on October 10th.

Writing a description of his journey to this place to his sister-in-law, he says :

"The journey up the Tigris was extremely interesting. We travelled up in a river steamer of small draught conveying a barge on each side to protect us against the bumps we made

at intervals into the river bank. We were able to go in our big steamer up to a place called Basra, which lies on the river Shatt el Arab, by which name the river formed by the junction of the Euphrates and the Tigris is called. A glimpse of Basra gave one 'furiously to think.' It brought before one's eyes the appalling difficulties which the troops who went there first had to face—a roadless country, no water except by the river, no stone, no timber, no labour except the Arab nomads, terrific heat, very little transport and so forth, *ad lib*.

"We are now building wharves, making roads, looking for water, accumulating river steamers, and constructing railways, setting up ice factories and soda water machines, installing electricity and huge engineer workshops. There is no limit to what has to be done. By this time lots has been done and I hope the men will have better, a very much better time than they had. There was, of course, much suffering in the early days which is very heart-rending. Still, the difficulties which had to be overcome were greater than the people in England realize."

He spent ten days in conferring with General Maude on the strategical situation, in making a thorough inspection of the state of the communication and the conditions of the troops, and also in forming some estimate of their future requirements.

On October 19th he telegraphed his views at length to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff in reply to the latter's telegram of September 30th. He found that the state of the communications made it possible, without imposing undue hardships on the troops, to maintain the force in its forward positions on the Tigris and Euphrates; and that improvement in every direction, before the advent of the next hot weather season, should put matters on such a basis that the maintenance problem should be no bar to the retention of these positions.

He considered the existing dispositions as the most suitable for dealing with the problem entrusted to Force "D." Our numerical superiority on the Tigris was a menace to the Turks there and to those opposite the Russians about Ruwanduz and Hamadan, where forces seemed to be evenly balanced. If the Turks diverted to act against us on the Tigris, and accepting the improbability of their being able to maintain more than sixty thousand about Kut, our force should be able to cope with the situation. If on the other hand, the Turks made an attempt to detach a force in Persia, while holding us on the Tigris, we could neutralize such a project by direct action in superior force.

General Monro had considered the alternative dispositions



contained in Sir William Robertson's telegram of September 12th (mentioned on page 155), but he did not think they would be advantageous. They would not command the rivers or the approaches to the oil-fields as effectively as the positions actually being held, in which, moreover, the troops were in healthier surroundings than if they were brought nearer the coast. A withdrawal from the present positions would be detrimental to our interests and would effect no economy of force as all the tribes would join against us in Mesopotamia; those in South Persia would be greatly unsettled and we should in consequence need greatly increased forces for protective duties along our communications and for the oil-fields. Moreover, tribesmen who had helped us would undoubtedly receive harsh treatment from the Turks and this would materially lower confidence in our prestige.

Sir Percy Cox did not attach much importance, said General Monro, to the problem of closing the line Shushtar-Isfahan, apart from the defence of the oil-fields, but General Monro had advised General Maude to arrange for a sufficient force to give effect to the Government instructions if operations became necessary in that direction. General Monro concluded: "To sum up, I consider that our present position on the Tigris is the one best calculated to carry out the instructions of His Majesty's Government and to uphold our prestige. In sending you this reply I have earnestly weighed your directions in respect of exercising all economy of force in this theatre of war and I hold the opinion that no economy would be effected by withdrawal at the present juncture."

Before leaving Mesopotamia for India, General Monro sent the Chief of the Imperial General Staff another telegram on October 26th in which he expressed the opinion that the force organization was on a satisfactory basis and was being well administered; that General Maude had a very complete knowledge of all details and was competent; that all matters relating to the maintenance and comfort of the troops showed satisfactory progress; that the hospitals were liberally supplied and the health of the troops was improving and that their morale was satisfactory.

He then continued that, while he realized that visions of Baghdad were beyond our sphere and held out no special advantages, he advocated a move forward by Maude's left to the Hai, to deprive the Turks of supplies and very likely manoeuvre them out of their positions on the right bank. Having settled the Hai, a move forward could be made with very little risk from Nasariyeh

to Samawa, whence greater control could be exercised over the tribesmen, with probably advantageous results. General Maude, he said, fully realized that severe losses must not be incurred, but in General Monro's opinion the operations he outlined could be accomplished with insignificant losses.

On October 27th Sir William Robertson concurred in these proposals.

Once again was Sir Charles' opinion on military questions of great importance accepted in full. He left Mesopotamia for India, after which his part in the Mesopotamian campaign was confined to procuring in India the personnel and material by means of which alone the operations could be maintained, and to giving his advice on the several matters which were referred, from time to time, for his opinion.

General Maude writing later to Colonel Repington says: "So we all set to work zealously, and by the time I left for the front after Sir Charles Monro's visit I felt that the foundations were secure and it was only a question then of building up our reserves of supplies before it would be safe to move. I was very glad when Sir Charles Monro came for it enabled him to see a good deal and it has been most helpful to our relations with India ever since. I only wish that he could have stayed longer and seen more, but I think he saw the maximum possible in the time at his disposal."

---

## CHAPTER XI

Arrival in India. Formation of cadet college and training schools. Mesopotamia continues to absorb attention. The advance on Baghdad following Monro's opinion. Further reinforcements for Mesopotamia. Formation of Labour Corps for France. Operations against the Mahsuds. The Indian Defence Force. British Government asks India to redouble her efforts. The Response. Formation of a Central Recruiting Board and a Central Employment and Labour Board. Results. Improvement of frontier communications. Construction of new roads and bridges. Establishment of air routes. Additions to mechanical transport. School for M.T. drivers. Introduction of General Hospital system for Indian troops. Allenby's tribute. Summary of India's effort. Question of unifying commands in Eastern Theatre of War.

GENERAL MONRO made his public arrival at Bombay<sup>1</sup> on his return from Mesopotamia and proceeded at once to Simla. He became immediately immersed in the daily work which comes to a Commander-in-Chief in India in addition to the many questions connected with the War. His greatest responsibilities may be said to have centred in the Mesopotamian campaign.

The 3rd (Lahore) and 7th (Meerut) Division had reached Mesopotamia from France. A reinforcement of five battalions and three infantry brigades was held in readiness to proceed to Mesopotamia as soon as their places could be taken by Territorials from England or by troops released from Egypt. Steps were also taken to replace the fourteen battalions which were lost at Kut. Six of these were formed from drafts in Mesopotamia and eight were raised and equipped in India. Three more battalions were sent out for line of communication duties.

Measures were taken to relieve some of the units which had been continuously at the front since the commencement of the War, and which had suffered much during the efforts to relieve Kut.

There were other military operations besides those of Mesopotamia which, although of a comparatively minor character, in their cumulative effect added considerably to the already heavy burden of the Commander-in-Chief. A small expedition was sent against the Sarhad tribes in Sistan, who soon offered their submission. In order to maintain the force in Sistan the Quetta-Nushki railway was extended to Dalbandin. .

<sup>1</sup> On November 1st, 1916.

The eastern cordon of troops, which was established towards the end of 1915 in East Persia to prevent enemy agents and propaganda from reaching Afghanistan, was maintained. A hostile gathering of Mohmands at Hafizkor on the border was dispersed and a blockade of the Mohmand Border instituted. This blockade, which commenced in the autumn of 1916 and lasted till the following July, was completely successful in bringing about the submission of the Mohmands.

One feature of the blockade was a strong wire entanglement supported by blockhouses placed at short intervals. The experiment was tried of running a live wire through the entanglement strong enough to electrocute a man. Shortly after the instalment of this wire the Mohmands made an attack and advanced to break through the entanglement. They were headed by a popular Mullah who rushed forward shouting that Allah had listened to his prayers and made him immune to harm from the bullets of the infidels. Unfortunately for him he had omitted in his devotions any mention of electricity and Allah had not, therefore, extended the immunity to cover that particular form of destruction, with the result that he was promptly electrocuted before the eyes of his followers.

As so often happened, surprise soon lost its effect. The Mohmand contrived various devices for dealing with the live wire, such as breaking it by driving cattle against it, crossing over it by means of rough wooden bridges, and they even managed to get hold of indiarubber gloves to protect themselves when trying to cut through the wire.

Sixteen garrison battalions arrived from home during the year, which gave much relief to the sorely squeezed military forces in India, and released seven battalions of Territorials for service in Mesopotamia.

The continual development of the port and base at Basra was the natural sequel to the expansion of the forces in Mesopotamia. Basra and Nawaz were linked up by metre-gauge and Quarah and Amarah by narrow-gauge track, while twenty-four miles of light railway were constructed close to the fighting front, all the material for which was supplied by India, together with the personnel to work the railways. A large number of river craft of various kinds was also sent out during the year.

It was during this year (1916) that radical changes were introduced into the recruiting system. Northern and Southern Army Commands were revived and the status of the Adjutant General and Quartermaster General in India raised—subjects which have already been alluded to. Thirty-five new animal transport units

were raised. The supply branch of the Supply and Transport Corps was reorganized into two sub-divisions, (1) the field supply unit consisting of the various divisional supply companies allotted to divisions, and (2) a supply dépôt company dealing with the supply and storage in bulk at the base and on the lines of communication.

A cadet college was established in the buildings of the Staff College at Quetta for the training of cadets from England. The cadets received six months' training before entering the Indian army. Schools were established for imparting special instructions :

A staff school at Mhow to train officers for the appointment of general staff officers, 2nd and 3rd grade, brigade majors, deputy assistants adjutant general and staff captains.

A young officers' school at Ambala for 150 officers, who had previously been attached for three months to a British unit in India.

A cadet school at Sialkot for training non-commissioned officers selected for commissions.

A school of gunnery at Akora (near Nowshera) for young and partially trained artillery officers.

A machine gun training centre at Campbellpore.

A bombing school at Lahore.

A training school at Nasik for the training of junior officers in the duties of a company commander. The course lasted twelve weeks and two hundred were trained at each course.

During peace, when the factor of time is not of greater importance than that of thoroughness, the preparation of schemes for the setting up of military establishments presents no particular difficulties. Nevertheless, there are many points which require careful consideration before, as well as after, any start is made, such as (1) the general idea, (2) the financial aspect, (3) whether the cost is justified or the money may not be spent in some better way, (4) the personnel required, can it be conveniently provided without undue detriment to some other branches of the service, etc. ? After the decision is made in favour of the idea the plan has to be drawn up which includes such questions as : (1) accommodation, (2) selection of staff, (3) rules and regulations regarding the objects and the work to be carried out, (4) domestic and menial establishments, (5) provision of equipment, etc., and in the case of schools and training establishments there are the questions relating to the instructional staff, training grounds and curriculum.

In war-time, where every delay is an obstacle, whether it be a ten foot ditch or only a rut, in the road towards success, and

when every case has to be considered in relation to the assistance it may be expected to bring to the progress of the operations, each of these schemes adds its load of weight to the daily cares of a Chief and his staff—cares which cannot be laid aside for a moment while the attention is turned to other matters.

The business involved in the preparation of every scheme would naturally be worked out by the staff and only come before the Commander-in-Chief in a more or less completed form. But it would fall to him to originate or agree with the idea when still in its embryo stage, to advise, concur or modify the various detailed headings, to pass his final orders and to bear the responsibility.

Sir Charles Monro stood up against the immense pressure of affairs which came in on him from every direction with a never failing strength and serenity.

Throughout the year of 1917 Mesopotamia continued to absorb the greater part of the attention of the Commander-in-Chief.

In a personal letter to him dated January 12th, Sir William Robertson had written : " I am glad that you are trying to meet our views by raising some additional units. India must contribute a great deal more than she has hitherto done. We will do everything we can to meet you as regards officers and rifles and in every other way. Meanwhile I am sure that you will peg away and get on with things. . . . I look to you to do all you can to help in getting us more men and you may depend upon me doing all I can at this end to help you."

General Monro pointed out that it was impossible to raise units in India as quickly as in Great Britain and he asked that the C.I.G.S. would give him ample notice of what was required from India. India was aware of her responsibilities and would do her best to respond to the wishes of the C.I.G.S. to the extent that these became known.

The intensity of General Monro's efforts to meet the behests of the C.I.G.S. will shortly be seen.

Following directly on General Maude's victory over the Turks at Kut el Amara arose the question of an immediate advance for the purpose of occupying Baghdad. There was no doubt as to the ability of the British forces being able to enter Baghdad. The point was, could they stay there ? The decision lay largely with the line of communications. Was it possible to keep supplied in Baghdad a force of three to four divisions and a cavalry division ?

Sir Charles Monro was anxious for the advance to commence

as early as possible, and on March 1st, 1917, he telegraphed in this sense to the C.I.G.S. He thought that if General Maude paused in order to reorganize his communications he would lose a great opportunity for giving the Turks a knockout blow and that the prize to be gained was worth the privations which might have to be suffered in order to secure it.

It should be borne in mind that India had a more direct interest in the Mesopotamian campaign than only that of keeping General Maude's army supplied with men and material. Persia and Afghanistan, said Sir Charles, were closely watching the course of events in Mesopotamia, and their future attitude depended largely on the turn these events would take.

Baghdad constituted for the Turks a base from which they were in a position to menace the Basra vilayet and Persia. Deprived of Baghdad they would find no nearer base than Mosul or Jerablus. Our occupation of the Baghdad vilayet would enormously increase our prestige in the East. In short, successful advance would solidify the situation as regards India so as to enable her to release a still greater number of troops for employment elsewhere.

It seemed to Sir Charles that better results were to be looked for on the Mesopotamian side than by pursuing the long and difficult route from Egypt through Palestine and Syria. He "accordingly submitted for consideration whether the troops, railway material and resources then being sent to Egypt from India would not be better employed in the improvement of our position at the convergence of the Tigris and Euphrates near Baghdad, with a view to allowing of direct and effective co-operation with the Russians in the course of the ensuing summer and autumn."<sup>1</sup>

On February 28th, that is, before General Monro's telegram had been despatched, the C.I.G.S. had telegraphed to General Maude the War Cabinet's instructions for his further course of action, a copy of which was forwarded to General Monro. General Maude was authorized by these instructions to press on to Baghdad provided he was satisfied, having due regard to the state of his communications and the enemy reinforcements, that he would not be subsequently compelled to retire. A retirement which might not be a military disadvantage in itself might become one indirectly on account of its objectionable political effect.

Sir William Robertson added a warning to General Maude not to enter Baghdad until he could maintain there four divisions

<sup>1</sup> Mesopotamian Campaign—Official History.

and a cavalry brigade, which he did not think could be before April 1st. In replying on March 2nd to General Monro's telegram of the 1st he pointed out that the instructions he had sent to General Maude were in general agreement with the Commander-in-Chief's views and he hoped that the instructions laid down a policy sufficiently wide to meet existing circumstances.

On March 4th thirteen fresh Indian battalions arrived in Mesopotamia.

On March 28th the Secretary of State for India sent a telegram to the Viceroy, in which he asked what further effort India could make, and what number of Indian combatant troops he would be likely to be able to produce by the spring of 1918, with a view to relieving British troops in India, Mesopotamia and Egypt for employment in France. He wanted to know if as many as a hundred thousand men could be counted on.

In order to clear up the situation before the Viceroy gave a reply to the Secretary of State's questions, General Monro wired to the C.I.G.S. to ask for early information of any change which might be contemplated regarding future operations in Mesopotamia which might be brought about by the revolution in Russia. He was anxious to know in order that he might arrange for the most advantageous disposal of India's resources in accordance with the altered situation.

The C.I.G.S. replied that a change in policy depended on what effect the revolution would have on Russia's military commitments. If the Russians maintained a vigorous attitude along their whole front and established themselves on the Tigris, General Maude, having only the Euphrates line to consider, would be able to afford a diminution of his forces. This would be advantageous for the reasons given by General Monro, and also in economizing shipping. The troops which could be spared from Mesopotamia would be very valuable in Palestine where it was proposed to take vigorous action against the Turks.

The Viceroy answered the Secretary of State on April 11th. He realized that, as a result of the Russian revolution, General Maude might be opposed by very superior Turkish forces in an attempt to recapture Baghdad. He said that India would raise the equivalent of two new divisions and a proportion of divisional troops to replace those who would go to reinforce General Maude.

It was appreciated by General Monro and Army Headquarters that the internal and external security of India were dependent on our ability to hold our position in Baghdad more than on anything else.

Following on these considerations two infantry divisions and



one cavalry brigade were formed, the whole of the infantry and cavalry for which, as also the personnel and horses for two brigades of field artillery, were found by India. At the same time one cavalry regiment and ten infantry battalions were sent to Mesopotamia.

By the end of the year the strength of the Mesopotamia Expeditionary Force (including followers) was four hundred and twenty thousand men, all of whom depended on India for food, clothing and equipment.

Early in September the C.I.G.S. enquired if India could provide one more cavalry brigade for Mesopotamia. There was a general impression at this time that the enemy would make a serious attempt to retake Upper Mesopotamia.

Having regard to the repercussions in Persia and Afghanistan which might be expected to follow on such an attempt, and which would almost certainly have their effect on India, General Monro expressed some doubt regarding the advisability of depriving India of a cavalry brigade at this moment. He realized, however, that the C.I.G.S. would take a more general view of the whole situation than he himself was able to do, influenced as he was by the local outlook. He was prepared, therefore, with the concurrence of the Government of India, to despatch the brigade if the C.I.G.S. still desired.

Sir William Robertson drew attention to the decreasing reliance which could be placed on the Russians and to the fact that the security of Mesopotamia was the best guarantee for the security of India and adhered to his request. General Monro undertook, therefore, to send out three Indian cavalry regiments during the following month, but said that he was unable to make up a complete brigade formation as he had not a horse artillery battery, machine-gun squadron, field troop or signal troop available.

It was finally arranged that India should furnish two cavalry regiments and that the rest of the brigade should come from elsewhere.

In July, 1916, the Commander-in-Chief appreciated the situation in its relation to India and based on such information as was at his disposal. As India's resources in man power and material became developed her part in the Great War became increasingly important. Germany, in order to check her output, might think it worth her while to induce the Turks to send an expedition, under German guidance, for the purpose of stirring up trouble in Afghanistan and along the frontier. A small force would be ample to effect this diversion.

Subsequently General Monro drew attention to the dangerous extension of General Marshall's line and exposed right flank. The situation on this front and in Trans-Caspia was indefinite. To meet the unexpected he recommended a central reserve, the strength and composition to be decided by the C.I.G.S., which might be conveniently located in India.

Baghdad was captured on March 11th, 1917. India contributed towards this great achievement three-fourths of the officers and men employed, nearly all the river craft and all the railway material and personnel. Seventy-three battalions and forty-one squadrons, out of the eighty-six battalions and forty-three squadrons engaged, were provided by India.

The question of a further advance by General Maude in participation with the Russians, with Mosul as the objective, was under consideration. General Monro was not in favour of this project. He did not think, on a space calculation, that it would lead to any effective co-operation between General Allenby and General Maude. He feared that whatever value might lie in the occupation of Mosul would be lost if the Russians failed to play their part, which, judging from recent events, appeared probable. An advance on our side without Russian co-operation would land us in a dangerous position, especially if the Turks should advance down the Euphrates.

In response to a demand made by the Imperial Government for fifty thousand labourers for work in France, steps were immediately taken to commence with the formation of fourteen Labour Corps of 1,150 men each.

By the end of July twelve complete corps had left for France. These were followed, between July and October, by two more corps, and later by reinforcements of five thousand men, after which recruiting for Labour Corps was terminated by orders from home.

Three fresh battalions were formed in Egypt from drafts and one more was sent direct from India.

In India the Mahsud Waziris had been indulging in one of their periodic bouts of raids and outrages.

They were elated by the gain of two minor successes over the inexperienced troops which were stationed on the frontier in the absence of officers and men trained in mountain warfare, who normally garrison India's outposts, and were becoming increasingly impudent.

The military weakness of Russia in Central Asia resulting from the Armistice, the machinations of the Persian Republican Party and of the anti-British propagandists, and the general

state of unrest in the East which was brought about by the War, did not permit of any appearance of weakness on our part. A spark at any point of the frontier might easily start a conflagration throughout Afghanistan and all the tribal territories.

As five infantry brigades were required to deal with the Mahsuds and a reserve had to be held in readiness to reinforce any portion of the frontier, General Monro asked permission to retain seven battalions of Territorials who were under order for Egypt and three Indian battalions who were about to sail for East Africa.

Although the inconvenience of locking up troops in this manner and at this time was fully recognized in India as well as at home, it was felt that in view of the situation in Persia, the uncertain temper of some of the Central Asia populations and the possibility of the German plan for carrying the War eastwards through Persia maturing, there was nothing for it but to accede to the Commander-in-Chief's request. The operations against the Mahsuds which occupied nearly six months were brought to a successful conclusion in August.

Fifty-five new battalions and a number of technical and administrative units were raised in India during the year; some companies of ex-Indian soldiers were formed for garrison duties; the Indian Army Reserve of Officers was expanded; followers' depôts were established; the technical schools mentioned on page 162 were started. It was in this year (1917) that the Central Recruiting Board and the Munitions Board were called into existence.

The Indian Defence Force was constituted in February. It provided for the compulsory enrolment of all male European British subjects in India between the ages of sixteen and fifty. It consisted of five companies of electrical engineers, six batteries mobile artillery, fifteen companies garrison artillery, thirty armoured motor batteries, twenty-five squadrons cavalry, one hundred and sixty companies infantry, nine motor-cycle companies and eleven armoured train detachments.

The year 1918 brought anxieties, responsibilities and labours to the Commander-in-Chief in India even greater than those which he had been faced with in the preceding year.

Russia had concluded an armistice with the Central Powers in December, 1917. Her defection opened the road for a Turco-German movement through Persia and Trans-Caspia towards Afghanistan, and therefore gave cause for apprehension regarding the inviolability of the Indian frontier.

In order to counter this danger, road construction and the



AT SNOWDEN, SIMLA

SIR CHARLES MONRO.

ILM DIN, HEAD CHUPRASSI.  
Formerly of 1st Punjab Infantry.



provision of a large amount of mechanical transport had to be undertaken for the maintenance of our troops on the Caspian. Simultaneously the German offensive on the Western Front called every available British soldier to France, in consequence of which considerable changes in the distribution and location of the formations of the Indian Army became necessary.

Nine regiments of yeomanry in March, followed by twenty-three battalions of infantry in April, were transferred from Egypt to France to help stem the German spring offensive. They were replaced by Indian troops.

Twelve Indian cavalry regiments were brought over from France to take the place of the yeomanry; the 3rd and 7th Indian Divisions were transported from Mesopotamia, and two complete divisions (twenty-two battalions), four mountain batteries, six newly-formed field companies, sappers and miners with a proportion of administrative units which the energy and organizing powers of Sir Charles Monro had provided, were sent from India to Egypt.<sup>1</sup>

Fifteen battalions were formed in Mesopotamia by withdrawing a company from each of the sixty battalions serving with the force. These companies were replaced in their original battalions by drafts furnished from India. Six of these battalions went to Egypt and the remainder were brought back to India. Three new companies of sappers and miners were raised in a similar manner.

Twelve Indian battalions were also sent to Salonika from Mesopotamia in order to release British troops for France. Arrangements were made to replace them in Mesopotamia by twelve newly-raised battalions from India when the signing of the Armistice with Turkey rendered this unnecessary. Two Labour Corps and the personnel of four Indian general hospitals were sent direct to Salonika.

The success of the operations in East Africa allowed of the Indian contingent being withdrawn. The strength of this contingent had never exceeded fifteen thousand men at one time, but the casualties, chiefly caused by sickness and privations, were so heavy that approximately forty-five thousand men in all had left India to join this expedition.

In February (1918) General Monro sent to the C.I.G.S. his views on the situation with reference to Persia. He considered a Turkish advance on Teheran improbable. It was sufficient if we closed the West Persian frontier against hostile emissaries. He recommended certain road improvements and the provision

<sup>1</sup> Official History of Operations in Egypt and Palestine.

of extra transport. British soldiers should not be employed in Persia, except in the last resort, in order to avoid hurting Persian susceptibilities.

He reiterated his disagreement with the proposal to advance on Mosul, a course of action which would call for a large numerical superiority and a great expense of material, and which could be easily replied to by a Turkish movement down the Euphrates.

The withdrawal of the Russians necessitated an extension of the East Persian cordon systems in order to frustrate the activities of hostile emissaries in the direction of Afghanistan and Persia.

On the Indian frontier operations were conducted on the north-west against the Marri tribes, which involved the employment of parts of three divisions, and on the north-east against the Kukis.

On April 2nd, 1918, Lord Chelmsford received a telegram from the Prime Minister which contained the following words: "At this time when the intention of the rulers of Germany to establish a tyranny, not only over all Europe but over Asia as well, has become transparently clear, I wish to ask the Government and people of India to redouble their efforts. Thanks to the heroic efforts of the British armies assisted by their Allies, the attempt of the enemy in the West is being checked, but if we are to prevent the menace spreading to the East and gradually engulfing the world, every lover of freedom and law must play his part.

"I have no doubt that India will add to the laurels it has already won and will equip itself on an even greater scale than at present to be a bulwark which will save Asia from the tide of oppression and disorder which it is the object of the enemy to achieve!"

In response to this telegram the Viceroy called together a conference which sat at Delhi April 27th to 29th. It was attended by some of the ruling chiefs, by members of the Imperial Legislative Council and by representatives of the Provincial Governments. The purpose of the conference, which was prompted by the Viceroy in the speech with which he opened the deliberations, was to endeavour to obtain the co-operation of all classes of the community, which could only be brought about by terminating communal animosity and by the cessation of political propaganda, at least for the time being, and to concert measures for the continuance of the war, and the development of Indian resources to that end.

The King-Emperor, too, sent a message of welcome and encouragement to the conference in which occur these inspiring

words : " Great as has been India's contribution to the common cause of the Allies, it is by no means the full measure of her resources and strength. I rejoice to know that their development and the fuller utilization of her man power will be the first care of the conference. The need of the Empire is India's opportunity and I am confident that, under the sure guidance of my Viceroy, her people will not fail in their endeavours."

The answer made by the country to this appeal was remarkable. A Central Communications Board was formed for the purpose of co-ordinating the working of the railways. A Central Food-stuffs and Transport Board worked out plans for the equitable distribution of supplies. A Central Employment and Labour Board arranged for the provision of labour and dealt with the many offers of service which arrived from all quarters.

The most noticeable result of the conference was India's undertaking to raise and train an additional 500,000 recruits within a year. During the previous war years up to this date the total number of men obtained and trained as combatants was 270,000. Between May 1st and the date of the Armistice, that is, in little over five months, 200,000 men came forward for enlistment. The Central Recruiting Board redoubled its efforts, while the Princes, Local Governments and people united in giving every possible assistance to the Provincial Recruiting Boards. In May, 1918, the monthly intake of combatant recruits was 16,000 ; by September it had risen to over 37,000.

" It would be impossible," wrote General Monro, " to specify the various channels into which the military activities of the country were directed during the closing stages of the War, but I do not need to remind the Government of India that the enlistment of the men themselves was only one, and by no means the most complex, problem associated with so large an increase to the Indian army. The housing, clothing, equipping, feeding and training of these additional recruits each presented problems requiring most careful foresight and the closest attention to detail.

" It reflects great credit on the various departments concerned that the work was carried through without serious hitch or dislocation to the normal life of the country."

Eighty-five new infantry battalions were formed during the year.

On the date the Armistice was signed the Indian troops and followers serving in the field were :

In France : 12,500 combatants (mostly artillery drivers), 6,500 followers.



In Palestine : 103,000 combatants, 15,000 followers.

In Mesopotamia : 113,000 combatants, 183,000 followers.

In Salonika : 15,000 combatants, 3,000 followers.

In East Africa : 4,500 combatants.

In Aden : 7,500 combatants.

In Bushire : 20,000 combatants and followers.

In East Persia : 4,000 combatants.

Amounting approximately to 273,500 combatants and 209,000 followers.

Among many other military improvements which were introduced this year on the initiative of General Monro, some of more, some of less importance, were the improvements of the communications on and towards the frontier. All the roads in the North-West Frontier Province were transferred from civil to military charges. Many of these roads were made fit for mechanical transport. The construction of twenty-one new roads, including over twenty bridges, was commenced.

A number of landing grounds were made for the use of the eighteen aeroplane squadrons which had been authorized in 1916 and which came under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief. Air routes were established from Lahore to Allahabad and from Lahore to Quetta. Eleven machine-gun companies were formed, of which four were subsequently despatched to Egypt and three to Mesopotamia.

The mechanical transport received large additions, mainly to meet the requirements of Mesopotamia. The school for the training of mechanical transport drivers which had been started in 1917 was enlarged until it was capable of giving an output of one thousand seven hundred mechanical transport drivers a quarter. A second school was also opened for the training of Ford car and Ford van drivers. Six mechanical transport companies were raised for service with the Army in India. Eight Indian mobile veterinary sections were formed for service on the North-West Frontier.

One important measure which was to prove of very great benefit to the Indian soldier was the adoption of the general hospital system in lieu of the regimental hospitals in which sepoys had always been treated hitherto.

These regimental hospitals were dreary places. They were inadequately equipped ; they had no operating theatres ; they had no proper beds or bedding ; a patient's food was prepared by his comrades ; they had no amenities of any kind, no ice, no fans, no comforts ; there was no nursing staff. It is not surprising that they were loathed by the men.

The Indian station hospitals which have taken their place are dieted institutions, equipped and staffed in accordance with the modern standard of requirements. They possess everything which the old regimental hospitals lacked. Apart from purely medical considerations, they do much towards improving the self-respect and contentment of the Indian soldier.

To sum up the account of India's contribution to the War :

The strength of all ranks of the fighting services of the Indian army in August, 1914, was 155,400. The strength of all ranks of the fighting services of the Indian army in November, 1918, was 573,400.

The casualties amounted to :

British officers . . .	2,700
Indian ranks . . .	106,600

Despatched from Indian ports :

Personnel . . .	1,302,400
Animals . . .	172,800
Supplies and Stores . .	3,691,800 tons

Supplies, clothing, equipment, etc., for all the Indian troops and followers serving overseas.

Supplies, clothing, equipment, etc., and the engineer stores, river craft, bridging material, railways for Mesopotamia.

Supplies to England for use of herself and Allies of large quantities of wheat, steel, pig-iron, minerals, hides, jute goods and many other articles.

The Royal Indian Marine<sup>1</sup> was responsible for transporting 950,000 men and all the animals which embarked at Indian ports. The tonnage of supplies and stores despatched to the different bases from Bombay and Karachi represented upwards of 3,690,000 tons. Fourteen hundred transports, eighty-five British war vessels, and one hundred and twenty hospital ships, six foreign war vessels and three prize steamers, and 1,100 other vessels for Mesopotamia were fitted or repaired at Bombay.

In August, 1914, India had not even the commencement of an Air Force. When war broke out one man arrived—a Captain—as the sole representative of the Air Force. He occupied one small room at Army Headquarters and was, for some incomprehensible reason, under the orders of the Director General of Ordnance. Soon after General Monro's arrival in India the formation of eighteen aeroplane squadrons, and an aeroplane

<sup>1</sup> The Royal Indian Marine came directly under the orders of General Monro in his capacity of Army Member of the Government of India.

park was authorized and a number of landing grounds were constructed in the North-West Frontier Province.

General Allenby, in his despatch dated June 28th, 1919, pays a tribute to the untiring and unselfish assistance rendered by Sir Charles whereby the Egyptian Expeditionary Force was reconstituted with Indian troops, and kept supplied with men and material at a time when the Commander-in-Chief's difficulties were very great. Sir Edmund Allenby went on to say that "the Indian troops worthily upheld the tradition of the Indian army. Though many units were newly-formed and contained a large proportion of men lately enlisted they fought and marched like veterans. The Fourth and Fifth Cavalry Divisions which did such brilliant work in the defeat and pursuit of the enemy to Damascus and Aleppo consisted mainly of Indian troops. India," said General Allenby, "has reason to be proud of the performances of her army in Palestine and Syria."

This was India's offertory to Victory, and if, great as it was, it seems small in respect of a population of 270,000,000 alongside the sacrifices made by the United Kingdom with a population of 45,000,000 it must be remembered that the call to War sounded a fuller and more insistent note in the West than it did in the East.

The Indians might be told, but they would not feel, as was felt in Great Britain and the Dominions, that this war was nothing less than a struggle of life or death. The majority of Indians, combatants and non-combatants, who joined up during the course of the War had only vague ideas of where and what Germany was, or what the fighting was about. Millions had never heard of Germany before 1914. Moreover, India was far distant from the principal scene of action. She was threatened only indirectly. At the distance of one hundred yards the threat of a sword is not as compelling as when the point is at one's breast!

To compare what India did with what the United Kingdom and some other parts of the Empire did in this matter is to compare unlike things. The fact remains that out of India's loyal co-operation there were created armies such as India had never seen before and which she had never been considered capable of producing.

The Commander-in-Chief in India would naturally, under the Viceroy, take the dominant part in initiating and organizing the expeditions and other military measures, the responsibility for which had been accepted by India.

A man cannot be separated from his work; it is part of his life. For this reason, it has been essential to give in the foregoing

account what is no more than an abbreviated summary of India's effort in the Great War. Without this no just appreciation could be made of the strength of Sir Charles Monro's personality or of the value of his services to the Empire.

The influence of a commander, whether of a company or an army, may be measured by the extent to which it is felt throughout his command, in peace as well as in war. The greater the sphere of action, the greater must be the qualities of the commander for his influence to pervade all portions and penetrate to the farthest limits of his command.

No sooner had Sir Charles reached his Headquarters than a very great increase in the intensity of effort was apparent on the part of all those concerned, whether directly or indirectly, in the mobilization of India's resources in men and munitions of war. His influence extended far beyond the military circumference. His experiences in France and Gallipoli enabled him to visualize Mesopotamia's requirements in a way that India, before his coming, could not do. England had drained India at the beginning of the War of men, material, guns, fodder, shipping, railway plant, and having exhausted her resources for the time being, forgot all about her. General Monro put things on a new plane. He thought imperially. He wrote frequent personal letters to the C.I.G.S. and the burden of his song was, "Say what you want and we will do what we can to help you." From this there resulted a scientific pooling of resources, not only in war material but also in supplies, which effected a saving of shipping at a time when shipping was becoming scarce.

He was the originator of the Munitions Board through whose activities India became the supply centre for Mesopotamia, Egypt, Salonika and East Africa, and the United Kingdom was relieved of many demands, e.g. hay was supplied in enormous quantities to nearly every theatre, the rails required for new lines in Mesopotamia and Palestine were found by pulling up branch lines in India; the millions of sandbags that revetted the trenches and field fortifications in France, Gallipoli and Macedonia were the product of the Indian jute mills.

It has been said that no man is born into the world whose work is not born with him. If this be true, Sir Charles Monro might be said to exemplify the converse, and that for every work there is to be done in this world, a man is born who is capable of doing it!

Towards the end of September, 1918, the advisability of unifying the command in the Eastern theatres of War was considered by the War Council. General Monro's name was suggested

for the appointment of General Officer Commanding-in-Chief Forces in the Middle East.

Replying to a communication from the Secretary of State on this subject Lord Chelmsford said : " Should the proposal for a separate Commander-in-Chief for the East be approved, I would suggest, with great deference, the name of Sir William Robertson for this command. His appointment would, I know, be entirely agreeable to the Commander-in-Chief in India. Failing that distinguished officer, I suggest Monro himself, the appointment of Commander-in-Chief being filled by another officer temporarily. But it will be realized by you that I hold strongly that the best arrangement would be for Sir Charles Monro, as Commander-in-Chief in India, to assume command of the Eastern theatres, his ordinary duties being carried on by others."

Either on account of the cessation of hostilities two months later or for some other reason, the proposal to unify the command of the Eastern theatres of war did not materialize.

---

## CHAPTER XII

Monro criticized for his attitude in Dyer case. The Defence of India and Rowlatt Acts. Gandhi. The Hunter Committee. The Punjab disturbances. Occasions of firing which were approved by Government of India. Dyer's proclamation. Description of Jallianwala Bagh. Brigadier General Dyer's action at Jallianwala Bagh. A deceptive mental picture. Dyer acted rightly in opening fire. The points at issue. Firing without a warning. The law on the subject. Dyer justified in dispersing the crowd. Dyer's evidence. His intention to kill as many as possible, in order to create an impression. Many innocent villagers killed. Comments. Sir Michael O'Dwyer's opinions. Dyer's statements after leaving India at variance with previous evidence. Analysis of his defence. Mr. Justice McCardie's opinions. The Crawling Order. Dyer ordered to resign. No bias in mind of authorities against firing when necessary. Comments. Did Dyer save Punjab, or India? Comments. Opinion of Clémenceau. Dyer's future professional career unaffected by order to resign.

THE cessation of hostilities brought little rest to the Commander-in-Chief. In March and April of 1919 disturbances occurred in the Punjab and some other parts of India which led to rioting, arson, the interruption of communications and brutal murders of a number of European and Indian policemen. There was cause for grave anxiety.

It is generally distasteful, as well as futile, to rake up old controversies, but there is one occurrence connected with Sir Charles Monro's professional life, for his share in which he has been adversely, sometimes harshly, criticized, by many who never knew him. Even among his friends there are some who, while applauding every other action of his career, imply either by a significant silence or by an expressed inability of comprehension, disapproval of his attitude in this particular instance. It is essential, therefore, having regard to his memory, to describe and examine in considerable detail the late Brigadier General Dyer's actions at Amritsar in April, 1919.

Great contentions often rage round and about certain significant events. Passions are excited, opposing sides are taken, violent judgments are passed and in the heat of argument the true facts are often ignored or petulantly thrust aside. What is known as the Dyer case is one of these events. In order to view it in its proper perspective it is necessary to give a short account

of the state of affairs in the Punjab and some other parts of India during March and April, 1919.

The period of the Great War had seen a number of crimes, murders, bomb throwings and political dacoities, more particularly in Bengal, perpetrated by revolutionists with the avowed object of overthrowing British rule in India. Statute law had proved insufficient to deal with the terrorism which was casting a fell shadow over Bengal and had manifested itself in the Punjab by crimes of violence. In consequence, an Act, entitled the Defence of India Act,<sup>1</sup> was introduced, to have effect for the duration of the War and for six months after its termination, which provided for the restriction of movement of dangerous persons, speedier trials and, in special cases, internment without trial. The introduction of this Act was soon justified, the Punjab quieted and terrorism ceased to reign in Bengal.

In order to enable the Government of India to deal effectively with these anarchist conditions should they unfortunately recur after the expiration of the India Defence Act, another Act known as the Rowlatt Act was placed on the Statute Book. It was considerably less drastic than the former Act, but it gave the Government the power to deal more effectively with certain emergencies than the ordinary processes of the law permitted.

The Act was only to be put into force if and when the circumstances again arose which had caused it to be framed. There was nothing tyrannical in the Act ; its only object was to protect the Indian public who had already suffered so grievously from the dacoities, robberies and assassinations by means of which the revolutionists foolishly sought to gain their ends.

But Mr. Gandhi's gorge rose against the determination of the Government to protect its subjects and preserve order. He denounced it as tyranny, and started his campaign of passive disobedience against the Rowlatt legislation. He decreed that March 20th should be observed as a day of mourning throughout the length and breadth of India, and the trouble began. Considering that the provisions of the Rowlatt Act were held in abeyance and never would be enforced unless dacoity, murder and violence, the indiscriminate tools of the revolutionists, again made their appearance, it was rather like mourning the death of a man who had never been born.

Mahatma Gandhi is a complex personality. He combines some of the attributes of a saint with some of the frailties of more ordinary mortals. If we lift a corner of his cloak of humility

<sup>1</sup> The Defence of India Act served a double purpose—it was directed against external as well as internal enemies.

we catch a glimpse of a figure puffed up with vanity.<sup>1</sup> He leads a simple life, discards sartorial adornment and fasts from time to time in order to atone for those sins which his followers have committed as the consequence of his own exhortations. He is full of inconsistencies. While denouncing the use by his countrymen of anything which is not the product of Indian soil and manufacture, he will travel to the scene of his oratory in a train drawn by an engine made in England and a motor-car which has issued from Mr. Ford's workshops.

He has written, in a publication (*Indian Home Rule*) of the National Party in 1922, that "hospitals were institutions for propagating sin," and of the medical profession that "it was injurious to mankind," and yet, when ill, he has gladly availed himself of the services of an English doctor.

His teachings have given rise to the death of hundreds, the misery of thousands, and hitherto have not brought an atom of material good to India. His followers might point to the moral good he has achieved. Whatever this moral good may be, the question whether it is compensation for the lives which have been lost must be left to the quick and the dead to settle between themselves. Saint or pseudo-saint, which is he? A tree is known by its fruits. It is not only in India that a man of limited intellectual attainments has, by striking a chord seductive to the uncultivated ear of the populace, obtained an authority and wielded powers which have done infinite harm to the community at large.<sup>2</sup>

It must be admitted that there are many persons, besides Indians, who regard Gandhi as a saint. One is tempted to ask "What constitutes a saint?"

The widespread opposition to the Rowlatt Bill cannot be accounted solely to Mr. Gandhi's personal influence; it was indeed mainly due to the false rumours which were circulated regarding the provisions of the Bill.

Amongst other things, it was said that under the Act the police were empowered to arrest any three or four men seen

<sup>1</sup> "What wrecked the chances of the Congress (of their representation at the Round Table Conference) was Mr. Gandhi's absurd impracticability or, as expressed in a Hindu quarter which is Nationalist by inclination, his overweening vanity." (*Times*, September 12th, 1930.)

<sup>2</sup> Lord George Gordon, an intellectual weakling, raised the cry of "No Popery," which, peaceful in intention at first, ended in riots and mob violence, that lasted, in London, for four days. Seventy-two private houses and four gaols were destroyed; the loss of property exceeded the value of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds; many people were killed; many fled in terror from London; business was totally suspended. There were many hangings of men and women after the riots had been quelled.



conversing together in the street, that the ownership of land was to be limited and everyone possessing more than this limit would have the surplus confiscated, that no one would be allowed to marry without the permission of Government, and so forth.

The credulity of the Indian masses is hardly comprehensible to a Western mind. They will believe with pathetic simplicity the most astounding lies. It is on this gullibility of the multitude that the influence of Congress chiefly rests.

It is not alleged that Mr. Gandhi or the more responsible of the political leaders had any say in the dissemination of these rumours, but they made no attempt to contradict them: silence meant assent in the minds of the people. These misconceptions regarding the motives of the Bill, these false rumours and Mr. Gandhi's campaign of passive resistance were not long in producing their natural result. Murder, arson, destruction of property soon appeared, commencing with several acts of mob violence at Delhi on March 30th and following days. In order to disperse these mobs the police had to fire on three separate occasions. Several persons were killed and more were wounded.

In October, 1919, the Government of India appointed a Committee to investigate the disturbances which had recently occurred in Bombay, Delhi and the Punjab, their causes and the measures taken to cope with them. Lord Hunter, late Solicitor-General for Scotland and a Judge of the High Court of Scotland, presided. There were four British and three Indian members. It was known as the Hunter Committee. It visited all the scenes of the disturbances and places where mob violence, conflicts and firings occurred.

Concerning the Delhi Riots the Hunter Committee wrote in their report: "The chief question raised is whether or not, firing on the mobs was justified on the three occasions when this took place. . . . In our opinion the answer must be in the affirmative so far as these three occasions are concerned. There is no doubt as to the right of the civil or military authority to fire upon an unlawful assembly if it is necessary for the public security that it should be dispersed, and this cannot otherwise be effected. . . . In no case was firing continued longer than was necessary to achieve the legitimate object of restoring order and preventing a disastrous outbreak of violence."

At Ahmedabad, the home of Mr. Gandhi, the rioting was serious. An Indian policeman and a European police sergeant were brutally murdered. The police were compelled to fire four times and the military ten or more times. The casualties among

the rioters were at least twenty-eight killed and one hundred and twenty-three wounded.

The Hunter Report says: "The use of the military force was unavoidable and the rioters alone were responsible for the casualties which ensued. . . . We think that the troops behaved with praiseworthy restraint in mortifying circumstances and the military action taken was not excessive."

At Viramgam there were three cases of firing by the police, resulting in ten rioters killed and forty wounded. The Hunter Report says: "The force used against the rioters was not excessive. If greater force could have been applied at an early stage the commission of an atrocious murder and much destruction of property might have been prevented."

In Lahore there was great turbulence. A mob coming down the Mall bent on destruction of Government property was broken up by firing which caused some casualties. Near the Lohari Gate there was more firing, and, the authorities having determined to regain control of the city which was in the hands of the mob, there was again firing at Hira Mandi. On each of these occasions some persons were killed and others were wounded.

Of the first of these cases the Hunter Committee remark: "What is abundantly proved in our opinion is that it (the mob) was repeatedly ordered to disperse, that it showed by its conduct a firm determination to proceed and that nothing short of firing would have been of any use."

On the second case they say: "The justification for this firing is obvious." And to the plea which was raised that more time should have been given to allow the attempt of a local pleader to get the crowd to disperse to have effect, they reply: "This form of criticism is always possible, but it seems particularly inapplicable on this occasion."

Of the third case the Committee says: "We think it was essential on this day to disperse this crowd and that it would have been the end of all chance to restore order in Lahore if the police and troops had left without dispersing it."

At Kasur there was firing which caused four deaths and other casualties of which the Hunter Committee Report writes: "We uphold the decision to fire upon this mob," and adds the opinion that the firing should have commenced sooner than it did.

At Gujranwala the superintendent of police ordered his men to fire on a threatening crowd and the Committee "entirely approve of his action." At the same place, later in the day, a mob was engaged in burning the post offices and other Govern-

ment property. The police officers wished to open fire on these rioters, but the Acting Deputy Commissioner, an Indian gentleman, refused to give the permission.

The Committee's opinion of his refusal is that "in failing to order the police to fire upon and so disperse the mobs around the burning post office, the Acting Deputy Commissioner appears to us to have committed an error."

For some time previous to April, 1919, political leaders in Amritsar had been exciting animosity towards the Government on the subject of the Rowlatt Bill, the Turkish peace terms and anything on which they could lay their hands and which might be in any way twisted to discredit the authorities in the eyes of the populace.

On April 10th, 1919, the agitation broke into overt acts of hostility. The manager of the National Bank, Mr. Stewart, and his assistant, Mr. Scott, were brutally beaten to death by the mob, and the manager of the Alliance Bank, Mr. Thomson, was murdered and flung into the street and his body burnt under a pile of bank furniture drenched in kerosene oil.

Several other Europeans, in fact any who were seen, were attacked and with difficulty escaped with their lives. A large crowd, apparently bent on mischief, was stopped on its way to the civil lines, and refusing to withdraw or disperse, was finally fired into. The opinion of the Hunter Committee was that "this resort to firing was completely justified as absolutely necessary in the circumstances and in no way exceeding the occasion."

A second time firing had to be resorted to when a crowd endeavoured to rush a picket at one of the crossings over the railway which ran between the civil lines to the city. The Hunter Committee Report says of this occasion: "We think that the order to fire was rightly given and we can find no ground for saying that the necessity of the moment was in any way exceeded or abused."

Enough has been quoted to show that whenever firing on riotous mobs was clearly necessary, it was justified and commended by the Hunter Committee and by the Government of India which passed their Report. The firing was in fact justified and commended in every case which occurred during the disturbances of March and April, 1919, except in one case to which we now come, namely, that of the Jallianwala Bagh at Amritsar.

Probably many of those who have expressed their opinions warmly on the issues of that case are not aware of the thirty odd instances in which crowds were fired into and rioters shot down,

and of the Government's approval of the action taken on every occasion, save one.

We must now relate the actual occurrences which constitute the tragedy of the Jallianwala Bagh. "Tragedy" is not too strong a term to use whatever the praise or blame apportioned to Brigadier General Dyer for his part in it. Mr. Justice McCardie, in his wonderfully instructive judgment in the O'Dwyer-Sankaran Nair libel case, says: "It is useless to minimise the tragedy of it. There it was, a very, very tragic episode."

On the evening of April 11th Brigadier General R. E. H. Dyer, C.B., who was commanding the Jullundur Brigade, arrived in Amritsar and assumed the military command there. The next day he marched a strong column round the city and sent parties of troops with police to make arrests in connection with crimes committed on the previous days. General Dyer says the inhabitants were very insolent and that a crowd collected at one point was dispersed with difficulty and he considered the advisability of firing, but he refrained as he thought he should warn the people by proclamation. Accordingly a proclamation was drawn up, but it does not appear to have ever been published, and as its terms are immaterial to the present narration it is unnecessary to quote it.

On the morning of April 13th, General Dyer marched through the city with a strong military escort and accompanied by the District Magistrate, and had another proclamation, differently worded from the first, read out at nineteen different places in the city. The people were summoned at each place by beat of drum. The proclamation was drawn up in these terms: "It is hereby proclaimed, to all whom it may concern, that no person residing in this city is permitted or allowed to leave the city in his own or hired conveyance, or on foot without a pass. No person residing in the Amritsar city is permitted to leave his house after 8 p.m. Any persons found in the streets after 8 p.m. are liable to be shot. No procession of any kind is permitted to parade the streets in the city, or any part of the city, or outside of it at any time. Any such processions or any gathering of four men would be looked upon and treated as an unlawful assembly and dispersed by force of arms if necessary."

Amritsar is a town of one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants and there must have been many people who did not hear the proclamation. It would not be possible on such an occasion to ensure that everyone, or nearly everyone would be cognisant of every order issued by the authorities, but the majority would probably know.

Meanwhile some of the rebel leaders had made an announcement that a meeting would be held at the Jallianwala Bagh that same afternoon. About 1 p.m. General Dyer heard of this intended meeting and that it was to take place at 4.30 p.m. About 4 p.m. definite information reached Brigadier General Dyer that the meeting was actually being held, in spite of the warning contained in the proclamation issued in the morning. He proceeded through the city, dropping picquets at certain spots on the way, and arrived at the entrance to the Jallianwala Bagh with a force composed of twenty-five Gurkhas and twenty-five Baluchis armed with rifles, and forty Gurkhas armed only with kukris, and with two armoured cars.

It is very important, before going further, to have a clear mental picture of the Jallianwala Bagh ; if misled by the word Bagh, which means "a garden," one's picture is altogether wrong, or if there is no picture in the mind at all, but simply a blank, then it is not possible to weigh at their proper value the occurrences which were about to take place.

The Jallianwala Bagh is in no sense a Bagh as understood by those familiar with India. The word "bagh" is usually applied to a garden, whether open or surrounded by a wall, or to a mango tope or clump of trees. The Jallianwala Bagh can best be described as resembling a very large sunken swimming bath with perpendicular sides.

In place of the space which surrounds a swimming bath, where one can walk or from which one can dive, the Jallianwala Bagh was almost entirely surrounded by houses and buildings. These buildings rose sheer from the edge of the Bagh, and would, if the Bagh were filled with water, appear to rise out of it, as the houses do at Venice. The end farthest from the main entrance was free of houses.

This main entrance, which was used by General Dyer and his men, led up some steps straight on to a small platform at one end of the Bagh and completely commanding it. This entrance was very narrow, so narrow in fact that the armoured cars had to be left in the street outside. There was one small exit somewhere about half-way down from the entrance and there may have been one or two others, but they were not marked in any way and would be easily overlooked, even if one were strolling through the Bagh with one's attention unoccupied. Apart from these exits the only way to get out would be by jumping and catching hold of the edge of the side, pulling oneself up and clambering out. This would be impossible for children. There were no trees, shelter, or cover of any kind from fire or from view.



*Front row: COLONEL MACLEAN, MAJ.-GEN. SCOTT, THE CHIEF, LADY MONRO, LIEUT.-GEN. SIR G. KIRKPATRICK.  
Back row: CAPTAIN KNIGHT, MAJOR MUIR, CAPTAIN BRIDGES, MAJOR MACARTNEY.*



General Dyer marched his men on to the platform mentioned above and came upon a crowd assembled at the opposite end of the Bagh, which was being addressed by a man about one hundred yards from where General Dyer's troops had taken position. It is not known whether there were any women in the crowd, but there were certainly some children. There may have been other men addressing the crowd, this is not certain. General Dyer estimated the number of the crowd at six thousand persons. From subsequent investigations it appears to have been at least double that number and probably more.

General Dyer placed twenty-five men on one side of the platform and twenty-five men on the other side. He then opened fire suddenly on the crowd without giving warning of his intention to fire or signifying his presence in any way. The crowd rushed to one end corner of the Bagh and then to the other in their efforts to escape, while Dyer directed the fire on where the crowd was thickest. The firing continued for ten minutes, and only ceased when the ammunition began to run short. Dyer then marched away leaving 379 killed and 1,200 wounded lying on the ground. These are the bare facts of the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy.

There was nothing heroic in the event itself, in the shooting down of a lot of unresisting people. What we have to consider is the motive which lay behind the act, and its after results.

What is the reason that the man who performed this unheroic action has been proclaimed by a section of the British public as little less than a hero, whilst there is another section which holds that he acted with unpardonable folly? How comes it that Sir Charles Monro, known not only by his friends, but by all those who ever served or came into contact with him, as the soul of chivalry and highmindedness, has been blamed by many, vilified by some, for "letting down" a soldier comrade who only did his duty?

The case has given rise to racial, political and personal animosities and conflicts. It has been distorted in its representation in certain partisan publications, and thus the actual happenings, Dyer's motives and the story of his subsequent treatment, have only been seen by those who are inadequately informed through a deceptive haze of error and misconception. Consequently the picture which has been created in the minds of many is falsely coloured. It is that of a violent crowd of armed rioters who have committed murder and arson and grievous assaults on Europeans, and have assembled in a certain place in defiance of orders, bent on further mischief. On to the scene comes Brigadier General Dyer, determined to put an end to the state of anarchy



and crime which exists in Amritsar. He prohibits all public meetings, and hearing that one is being held in defiance of his orders, he marches to disperse it by force. When he arrives at the place where the meeting is being held he finds himself faced by a dangerous and threatening mob. He opens fire on them, killing and wounding a considerable number, and the mob is dispersed. The result of his severe and determined action is that the country immediately quietens down and India is saved from the dangers which threatened.

Brigadier General Dyer is at first commended for his services at Amritsar, then when subsequently his actions are questioned in certain quarters, the Commander-in-Chief in India, Sir Charles Monro, turns round on him, forces him to retire from the Army and to forego the promotion and high commands which would have otherwise come to him. The career of a gallant soldier who has rendered an incalculable service to his country is ruined, because the Commander-in-Chief has not had the courage to stand up for him against a political outcry.

That Dyer was justified in opening fire on the crowd at the Jallianwala Bagh has never been questioned.

The points at issue are :

- (1) Was he right or wrong in opening fire on a crowd of people without giving any warning of his intention to do so ?
- (2) Was he right or wrong in continuing to fire for ten minutes, i.e. until his ammunition ran out ?

These are the two questions which have to be considered, with minds free of prejudice and partisanship, before we can come to any conclusions worth having regarding the justice of the treatment meted out to Dyer.

There is one other question which calls for passing notice. It has some bearing on the case as will subsequently appear. When Dyer heard of the intention to hold a meeting why did he not take steps to prevent it ? It was somewhere about 1 p.m. that Dyer heard a meeting was going to be held at 4.30 the same afternoon. When the above question was put to him he replied, "I went there as soon as I could. I had to think the matter out ; I had to organize my forces and make up my mind as to where I might put my picquets. I thought I had done enough to make the crowd not meet. If they were going to meet, I had to consider the situation and make up my mind what to do, which took me a certain amount of time."

In a military sense, the problem was a simple one—much simpler than those with which military commanders usually have to deal. The size of the force was small, the number of

units to be handled few, the objective clear. The drawing up of the necessary orders and their issue presented no difficulties.

It seems that if Dyer had really set himself to it he could have prevented the meeting and the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy would not have occurred. But then the lesson, which, we shall shortly see, it was General Dyer's intention to convey, would never have been delivered. Whether or no Dyer ever considered the possibility or advisability of preventing the meeting from taking place we must accept his statement that after receiving the information and up to the hour when he started to march to the Bagh his time was occupied in thinking what he would do, and in making his arrangements.

It is essential at this point to have our ideas clear regarding

- (a) The nature of the crowd which assembled at the Jallianwala Bagh.
- (b) The circumstances and limitations under which it is permissible to fire on a crowd. Is it necessary to give warning of the intention to fire ; and the amount of force which may be used ?

“ An unlawful assembly is an assembly which may reasonably be apprehended to cause danger to the public peace, through the actions of persons constituting the assembly. As soon as an act of violence is perpetrated it becomes a riot, while if the act of violence be one of a public nature and with the intention of carrying into effect any general political purpose, it becomes an insurrection or rebellion.”

“ A participator in an insurrection may be held guilty of treason.” (Manual of Military Law.)

Although no specific act of violence could be attributed to this particular crowd, it was composed of persons many of whom had undoubtedly participated in the recent crimes which had been committed. The city was in a state of open rebellion and this was a rebellious crowd and justly liable to be treated as such. All the individuals in the crowd, however, cannot be classed as rebels. Many were there who came out of curiosity. Many were villagers come to attend a horse fair which was annually held at Amritsar, and would have no knowledge of the fact that the meeting had been proclaimed. Persons who accompany or are caught up in a rebellious crowd must share in the consequences which befall that crowd, however innocent they may be ; but, in mercy, they should be given the chance if possible of dissociating themselves from it before extreme measures of suppression are employed.

According to the law of Riot and Insurrection, a crowd which

does not disperse within one hour after the Riot Act has been read to it may be dispersed by force, even though it may not be actually engaged in any felonious act at the time. But if the crowd is engaged in acts of pillage, arson, destruction of property or killing, or if its attitude is so threatening as to endanger the forces employed to disperse it, the military can use force without any delay, the only proviso here being that where it is necessary for the military to resort to extreme measures, they should, whenever possible, give sufficient warning of their intention.

Dyer's proclamation took the place of the Riot Act; the crowd was a rebellious one and having assembled, Dyer was not only legally justified in dispersing the crowd, it was his bounden duty to do so in the interest of public security. When Dyer arrived at the Jallianwala Bagh he found the crowd squatting, in the Indian manner, around a man who was haranguing it. Many would have had their backs towards Dyer, and few could have been even aware of his presence. He immediately, and without warning, opened fire.

Was there any military or other reason for this instantaneous action? Was there, for instance, any danger of his force being overwhelmed by the mob if he gave notice of his presence? In his official report dated August 25th, 1919, Dyer makes no suggestion of the existence of any emergency or of anything in the demeanour of the crowd which compelled him to fire at once and without warning. He said in effect that his mind was made up before ever he arrived at the Bagh, that if he found a crowd assembled there he meant to fire and that he would fire immediately, that in fact he meant to kill in order to give a lesson and create an impression.

Any opportunity to disperse which he might have given to the crowd by warning it beforehand would have run contrary to this intention, and Dyer thought it might have dispersed if warning had been given, although this was not the opinion of the Hunter Committee. It is certain that the act of firing without warning was not forced on Dyer. He did it deliberately and with intention.

The majority of the people who assembled at the Bagh had done so in direct defiance of Dyer's proclamation, and it may be confidently assumed that many of them had been party to, if indeed they were not the actual perpetrators of some of the atrocious deeds which had recently been committed. At the same time there were a number of persons present who were innocent both in deed and intent and who had probably never heard of the proclamation.

The Punjab Government, in the case which it drew up for the

information of the Hunter Committee, said: "There were a considerable number of peasants present at the Jallianwala Bagh meeting on the 13th but they were there for other reasons," and further they remark: "It is clear that a considerable number of them (villagers) did attend as spectators."

Large crowds of villagers had collected for the Baisakhi horse fair for lawful purposes in connection with the fair and with no thought of rebellion in their minds. Dyer appears to have recognized that the crowd was not entirely composed of rebels for he wrote in his report that it appeared to be a mixed one consisting of city people and outsiders. In the firing which subsequently took place, eighty-seven of these villagers were killed. There must have been approximately three hundred of them wounded.

It has been suggested in defence of Dyer's omission to give a warning, that the crowd was so great that it might easily have overwhelmed his small force by sheer weight of numbers, and that he fired on the instant of arriving in order to reduce as much as possible this danger. But he himself disposes of that line of argument. When asked if it did not occur to him that it might have been as well to warn the crowd before commencing to fire, he replied that he had not thought about it. His actual words were, "At the time it did not occur to me. I merely felt that my orders had not been obeyed, that martial law was flouted, and that it was my duty to immediately disperse it by rifle fire." Not a word anywhere, be it noticed, about having to do it for the sake of self-protection.

People may differ as to whether Dyer was justified or not in firing without giving warning, but everyone must admit that if he had done so he would have acted more in the spirit of English law without minimizing the impression he desired to create, and some poor harmless villagers would not have been needlessly killed.

Again turning to the law of Riot and Insurrection, we find that in the case of "an assemblage which declares openly that it proposes to attack the constituted authorities, and which consists wholly or partially of armed men, force should be repelled by force, care being taken to avoid any unnecessary bloodshed or injury."

We may take it that the crowd with which Dyer had to deal was a rebellious one. We may also assume that it was armed from the fact that, in all probability, a large number of the men carried lathis, although, in a military sense, men with long sticks in their hands would not usually be looked on as armed in oppo-

sition to modern firearms. With the reservation that he should first have given a warning, we can agree that Dyer was justified in dispersing the crowd by force.

That the force used was enough and more than enough to disperse the crowd cannot be disputed, for as soon as the firing commenced the crowd "started to disperse and during the ten minutes it lasted, was trying to escape as fast as it could."

Dyer fired for ten minutes; he killed 379 persons (87 being innocent villagers) and wounded 1,200. He said that if there had been more troops available he would have inflicted more casualties. He said that if he could have got his armoured cars through the narrow entrance leading into the Bagh, he would probably have opened fire with the machine-guns, in which case the casualties would have been very much higher. It is evident, therefore, that he meant to kill or wound as many of the crowd as the means at his disposal allowed. What were his reasons?

In his evidence before the Hunter Committee, Dyer stated that, as far as the crowd in front of him was concerned, his idea was not merely to disperse it, it was "to give them a lesson," "to punish them," "that it would be doing a jolly lot of good and they would realize that they were not to be wicked." But he also said it was to "create a wide impression," and to strike terror not only in the city of Amritsar, but "throughout the Punjab."

In his report he wrote: "I fired and continued to fire until the crowd dispersed and I consider this is the least amount of firing which would produce the necessary moral and widespread effect it was my duty to produce if I was to justify my action. If more troops had been at hand the casualties would have been greater in proportion. It was no longer a question of merely dispersing the crowd, but one of producing a sufficient moral effect from a military point of view, not only on those who were present, but more especially throughout the Punjab. There could be no question of undue severity."

It is apparent, therefore, that Dyer had two objects in his mind at the time of the occurrence. One was to punish the crowd for whatever share any of the individuals who composed it may have had in the recent outrages, and for assembling in defiance of his proclamation; the other was to produce a moral effect throughout the Punjab.

Here, again, as far as his immediate action against the crowd is concerned in firing to the extent he did, Dyer acted contrary to the spirit of English law which enjoins that no more force is

to be used than is absolutely necessary to induce a riotous or rebellious assembly to disperse. But what about the other question? Is it justifiable to resort to deadly measures of suppression in one place in order to create an impression or act as a warning in other places? Were there insurrections in this country might an officer, on his own authority, shoot down people in Liverpool in order to create an impression in Birmingham and Manchester? It must be borne in mind that here was no case of an organized conspiracy, such for instance as the Indian Mutiny. The atrocities which were committed were the result of the lying propaganda and false rumours which had gone about the country regarding the intentions of the Government with respect to the Rowlatt Bills, and were enacted by excited and irresponsible mobs. There was no sort of organized or concerted action between the places where the atrocities had occurred.

The same laws are not equally adapted to the requirements of different states. Their nature and severity must vary as the characteristics and state of civilization of different nationalities vary. But the fundamental ethics of justice and equity hold good for every portion of this globe. If it would be right for an officer to take it on himself to shoot down people in Liverpool in order to overawe those in Birmingham and Manchester, in circumstances similar to what existed in Amritsar and the Punjab in April, 1919, then Dyer was right; if it would be wrong, then Dyer was wrong.

There can be little doubt what the verdict of the great majority of the British public would be, if the scene were shifted from Amritsar to Liverpool. The opinion, as given in the majority report of the Hunter Committee and signed by the President and all the British members, is expressed in the following words: "In our view this was unfortunately a mistaken conception of his duty. If necessary a crowd that has assembled contrary to a proclamation issued to prevent or terminate disorder may have to be fired upon, but continued firing upon that crowd cannot be justified because of the effect such firing may have upon people in other places. The employment of excessive measures is as likely as not to produce the opposite result to that desired."

The late Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, admitted in an English court that on the statement which Dyer made to the Hunter Committee his conduct was indefensible. It was chiefly on the evidence which came before the Hunter Committee, and on that Committee's conclusions, that the Government of India based their condemnation of Dyer.

They said, "After carefully weighing all these factors, we can arrive at no other conclusion than that at Jallianwala Bagh General Dyer acted beyond the necessity of the case, beyond what any reasonable man could have thought to be necessary, and that he did not act with as much humanity as the case permitted."

But after Dyer had left India he produced other and new reasons in defence of his actions at the Jallianwala Bagh. In a report submitted by him for the information of the Army Council in July, 1920, he said: "I found a clear conviction upon the part of the local officials and abundant signs that a determined and organized movement was in progress to submerge and destroy all the Europeans on the spot and in the district and to carry the movement throughout the Punjab and that the mob in the city and the excitable population of the villages was being organized for this purpose," and he goes on to recount what he calls "a fair summary of the motives and grounds of my action.

"(a) I had before me the general situation, summarized in the despatch of the Secretary of State, and all its attendant dangers. In addition I knew of the cloud from Afghanistan which broke three weeks later.

"(b) I had before me in the Jallianwala Bagh not a fortuitous gathering which at worst had assembled negligently or even recklessly contrary to a proclamation, but a mob that was there with express intent to challenge Government authority and defy me to take any effective action against it, in particular to defy me to fire upon it.

"(c) I knew that it was in substance the same mob that had been in course of organization for some days and had committed the hideous crimes of April 10th, and was the power and authority which had ruled the city in defiance of Government.

"(d) I knew, as far as human foresight could go, that if I shirked its challenge and did not, then and there, crush it, it would have succeeded in the design of its leaders, contempt and derision of Government power would have been complete, and that there would infallibly follow, that night or next morning, a general mob movement both from inside and outside Amritsar which would have destroyed all the European population, including women and children and all my troops and involved in the ruin the law-abiding Indian population as well.

"(e) I knew that this result would lead to a similar result in numerous places throughout the Punjab.

"(f) I knew that ineffective action against the mob would



AT FLAGSTAFF HOUSE, DELHI





gravely endanger my small force on the actual spot and make its safe withdrawal difficult, and that its destruction would infallibly produce the results indicated in the last two paragraphs.

“(g) I knew that on the four occasions when firing took place on the 10th in Amritsar its effect in preventing disorder and restoring security had been quite ineffective and that with the small body of troops at my disposal and the large, determined and defiant assembly before me, I could produce no sufficient effect except by continuous firing.”

In his evidence before the Hunter Committee, Dyer stated specifically that his reasons for opening fire without warning and for continuing to fire for as long as he could, i.e. for ten minutes and until his ammunition was practically expended, were in order to punish the crowd for assembling in defiance of his order, to give it a lesson, to create a wide impression and produce a sufficient moral effect, not only in Amritsar but more especially throughout the Punjab, and that he had decided on his course of action before he ever entered the Jallianwala Bagh.

Here were two definite reasons, viz. to punish the crowd and to create an impression. In his report to the Army Council there were other reasons which appear to have influenced him, viz. the situation on the Afghan frontier, the impending murder of British men, women and children at Amritsar and throughout the Punjab, the organization of the villages and other places for the purpose of committing further atrocities; the ineffectiveness of the firing which had taken place on previous occasions, the danger to his own force.

Surely these were sufficiently weighty causes to be worth imparting to the Hunter Committee. Why was no mention made of them on that occasion? Perhaps Dyer surmised that they would not have carried conviction into the minds of the Hunter Committee or the Government of India. They certainly would not. The more closely one examines them the less convincing do they become. Perhaps when he appeared before the Hunter Committee, Dyer had not formulated them clearly in his own mind, although he had plenty of time to do so, especially as they would have been occupying his thoughts for some time previous to his proceeding to the Jallianwala Bagh.

Whatever may have been the reasons which accounted for the reticence he maintained on these points until after his departure from India, they have not been communicated by Dyer or by anyone else. But one thing is evident, namely, either on account of the strain of the situation in which he found himself, or from

a temperamental excitability, Dyer's imagination conceived a great deal more than was warranted by the actual facts. This will be apparent from the following analysis of the several reasons contained in his statement to the Army Council which will now be taken, one by one.

1. "I found . . . abundant signs that a determined and organized movement was in progress to submerge and destroy all the Europeans on the spot and in the district and to carry the movement throughout the Punjab, and that the mob in the city and the excitable population of the villages was being organized for this purpose."

Not only did no one else, qualified to give an opinion on the subject, see any of these signs of a determined and organized movement, but all the available information goes to show that the atrocities which were committed were the unpremeditated deeds of frenzied mobs acting on the spur of the moment and under the fell influence of incontrollable excitement.

The Punjab Government in a report presented by them to the Hunter Committee said: "The movement against the (Rowlatt) Act working up to the general demonstration of April 6th was not of itself of an exceptional character. There was not, as far as can be ascertained, any general intention of carrying it beyond political agitation and passive resistance. . . . For the disturbances that ensued we must mainly look to local causes."

Regarding Amritsar they say that certain local factors resulted in turning what started as a protest in force against the deportation of Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal (two local agitators) into mob violence marked by murder, pillage and incendiarism. Of Kesur they said that "it is safe to exclude any suggestion that disorders were long premeditated or due to an organization to that end," and of Gujrat that "the record of the disturbances in this District discloses no evidence of organization."

The Deputy Inspector General of Police in the Punjab who made a special investigation of the causes of the disturbances reported "that behind and beneath the disturbances there was no organization such as could not have been seen by anyone following political development in India during the last few years," and he expressed the opinion that the disturbances were more or less spontaneous.

As far as the villagers were concerned an officer who had charge of a mobile column said: "My impression as regards the loyalty of the district was that, outside the larger towns, the country-folk seemed contented. They were at the time busy

in cutting their crops and did not appear interested in anything else."

The Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar said that he could not "point to any fact existing before April 10th to suggest that in the beginning of April there was any plot on the part of any stratum of society in Amritsar to encourage violence against Europeans." When asked whether it would be consistent with the facts, as he knew them, to regard the outbreak of April 10th as a case of protest against the deportation of Drs. Satyapal and Kitchlew, which spontaneously developed into mob violence marked by murder and incendiarism, he replied: "I think that is a very good account. If spontaneously developed, it flared up in a moment. I do not think people went out with that design." There was, in short, no organized movement, either in the cities or outside them.

2. I knew of the cloud from Afghanistan which broke three weeks later."

A knowledge of the fact that there were certain military activities in Afghanistan which did, as it happened, culminate three weeks later, in a feeble effort at invading India, can hardly be accepted as a contributory cause for opening fire on a recalcitrant crowd in Amritsar. In any case it was not the business of a comparatively junior officer to take this into account, without instructions from higher authority that, owing to a serious military situation elsewhere, extraordinary measures of repression were to be employed against any attempted uprisings in India. As there was neither a serious military situation nor any signs of an organized conspiracy against established Government, the higher authorities naturally did not issue any such instructions. Dyer went outside his province if he allowed a future possible development on the frontier to influence his actions in Amritsar.

3. "I had before me in the Jallianwala Bagh not a fortuitous gathering . . . but a mob that was there with express intent to challenge Government authority and defy me. . . . I knew that it was in substance the same mob that had been in course of organization for some days and had committed the hideous crimes of April 10th."

It was legitimate for Dyer to assume that some of the persons in the crowd had taken part in the previous outrages, but to say that it was in substance the same crowd was going too far. It would, of course, have been a matter of very great difficulty to collect again into anything like the same crowd, any of those disorganized and fortuitous mobs which had gathered together two days previously.

Sir Michael O'Dwyer, when giving evidence, said : " The view I took then was that that meeting was held to show their hostility to Government and their sympathy with the people who had committed rebellion," and on the suggestion being made to him that those who assembled at the Jallianwalla Bagh on April 12th may have been different people altogether from those who committed the actual murders and arson and other violent acts he replied : " Yes, but they were there to show their sympathy with the people who committed murder and rebellion and their hostility to the Government which was repressing it." It is apparent, therefore, that in Sir Michael O'Dwyer's opinion the crowd was not the same mob as had committed the hideous crimes of April 10th but one composed of persons collected to express sympathy with the perpetrators of those crimes. And we know that one quarter of the crowd was composed of innocent villagers.

4. " I knew as far as human foresight could go, that if I shirked its challenge and did not then and there crush it . . . there would infallibly follow on that night or the next morning a general mob movement both from inside and outside Amritsar which would have destroyed all the European population, including women and children and all my troops, and involved in the ruin the law-abiding Indian population as well. . . . I knew that this would lead to a similar result in numerous places throughout the Punjab."

These assumptions are discounted by what has already been said regarding the composition of the crowd. Defiance, sullenness, there may have been, but murder was not in the mind of the crowd which assembled in the Jallianwala Bagh. The mass psychology of a heterogeneous collection of people being what it is, there is no saying what a crowd may or may not do under the influence of demagogic oratory or other cause of excitement. It would be open to Dyer to say that he anticipated certain disastrous results which would follow a failure on his part to disperse the crowd and from not using measures of exceptional severity in order to do so. But Amritsar had been quiet for two whole days before the Jallianwala crowd assembled. The people of the countryside were peaceful and uninterested ; and as to what was likely to occur in other parts of the Punjab, Dyer had not personal cognisance. There was no sort of evidence forthcoming that pointed to the intention or likelihood of a general European massacre at Amritsar and throughout the Punjab. Dyer's confident assertions that he *knew* certain things would *infallibly* happen were not founded on any known facts ; he himself pro-

duced no facts or information which would bear them out ; they were nothing more than creations of his imagination.

5. "I knew that ineffective action against the mob would gravely endanger my small force on the actual spot and make its safe withdrawal difficult. . . ."

Dyer has told us that he fired at once and continued to fire in order to produce a moral "widespread effect"; he said he thought it was quite possible he could have dispersed the crowd without firing; his reply to a remark made by General Beynon that he did not understand why Dyer had shot so many was that the mob, while endeavouring to escape, was gathering for a rush; he said he feared the mob might get round him and assail him from behind. It is impossible to reconcile these statements. Neither his report to the General Staff in India on August 25th, 1919, nor in his evidence before the Hunter Committee did he make suggestion of anything in the demeanour of the crowd, prior to giving the order to fire, which had the appearance of a threat to his own force.<sup>1</sup>

In his report to the Army Council of July 3rd, 1920, he pointed to the dangerous position of his own force as a significant reason for his action. Either he fired with a view to inflicting as many casualties as he could because he desired to create a moral impression or because he thought his own force was in danger. One cannot have it both ways. If one leaves one's house with the avowed intention of killing a man, and coming upon him in the street, hits him on the head before he is aware of one's intention, it is no use afterwards to say one had to do it in self-defence.

It may here be pointed out that the danger of Dyer's force being assailed from behind was extremely small. On account of the local conditions, it will be plain to anyone who has seen the Jallianwala Bagh that it would have been difficult even for an organized mob, whose leaders had thought out a plan beforehand, to surround Dyer's force. And if by any chance some members of the crowd had succeeded in getting behind Dyer it would only have been to find themselves faced with the machine-guns of the two armoured cars which, it will be remembered, had remained in the street. Dyer appears to have overlooked the presence of these armoured cars, which made him quite safe from any attack from behind.

As to the danger of his small force being overwhelmed by a sudden rush, whatever possibility of this there might have been during the first two or three minutes after the firing commenced must have passed away long before the ten minutes of its continuation had elapsed.

<sup>1</sup> See page 188.

If we are to accept the view that, as he told General Beynon, he killed so many because his force was in danger of being rushed and of a portion of the crowd getting behind him, all one can say is that in the excitement of the moment he became unduly alarmed and failed to appreciate the situation correctly. But, since he did not put this view before the Hunter Committee or in his report of August 25th, 1919, we are bound to accept the other reason, viz. that he fired with the object of making an impression. These apprehensions regarding the safety of his force appear to have come as an afterthought.

6. "I knew that on the four occasions when firing took place on the 10th in Amritsar its effect in preventing disorder and restoring security had been quite ineffective and that with the small body of troops at my disposal and the large, determined and defiant assembly before me I could produce no sufficient effect except by continuous firing."

It is not correct to say that the firing which occurred on April 10th had been quite ineffective. It is true that it had not restored order in Amritsar; it had not been resorted to with that end in view. But, in preventing the huge and excited mobs from raiding the civil lines, it had been completely successful in accomplishing the purposes for which it had been employed. After the 10th and up to the time of the Jallianwala Bagh affair there were no more murders, or arson or pillage, or attempts to commit these crimes and although it cannot be said that the city had resumed its normal conditions, nevertheless there were evident signs that the spirit of rebellion was burning itself out.

As to the "determined and defiant assembly" which Dyer says was before him, the demeanour and composition of that assembly have been dealt with under (3).

To know a thing is to be in possession of certain facts, to have certain information concerning it. When Dyer told the Army Council that he knew a number of things related above, he did not really know them; he only supposed them or conjectured the possibility of their happening. This is very far from knowing them.

Mr. Justice McCardie in the course of his address to the jury during the trial of the action for libel brought by Sir Michael O'Dwyer against Sir Sankaran Nair read out the extract of Dyer's report which has been given on page 192 and made the following declaration:

"I said in the course of my opening words to you that I would express my opinion to you subject to your judgment, and I am about to express it, for speaking with full deliberation and know-

ing the whole of the evidence given in this case, I express my view that General Dyer under the grave and exceptional circumstances acted rightly and in my opinion upon his evidence, he was wrongly punished by the Secretary of State for India. That is my view and I need scarcely say that I have weighed every circumstance, every new detail that was not before the Hunter Committee.

“ But that opinion which I now express is an opinion which you as a jury may say you disagree with and take up another position in regard to the matter. Assuming that you will take an opposite view—I know that the matter is one which lends itself to many differences of opinion—and that you may think this was an atrocity, even although General Dyer committed the act with splendid integrity of purpose, yet the question is, was it within the meaning of the libel which is set out, an atrocity committed by the plaintiff, which is a wholly different question.”

There are many people who regard this opinion of Mr. Justice McCardie as a conclusive vindication of Dyer and *pari passu* a condemnation of Sir Charles Monro for his share in the censure passed by the Government of India. At first flash this is a comprehensible assumption on their part, especially as they are not generally conversant with the whole statement. The words “ I express my view that General Dyer . . . acted rightly and in my opinion . . . was wrongly punished . . . ” have been widely published apart from their setting. But a little consideration will show that the opinion expressed by the learned Judge is not authoritative. As he has been careful to explain, “ it is a matter which lends itself to many differences of opinion ” and the jury were entitled to take an opposite view to his.

Although delivered from the Bench it was not an *ex cathedra* pronouncement, as many have taken it to be, which settled the controversy once and for all in favour of Dyer. Moreover, the jury, in giving a verdict for the plaintiff in the libel case which was being tried, were not passing judgment on the Dyer case. The question to be decided, as Mr. Justice McCardie told them, was not whether Dyer had committed an atrocity, but whether the plaintiff, i.e., Sir Michael O'Dwyer, had within the meaning of the libel, committed an atrocity, “ which is a wholly different question.”

There is also another reason for not appraising the judge's opinion too highly. He said that on the whole of the evidence it was his opinion that Dyer acted rightly and was wrongly punished. From the fact that he read to the jury the aforementioned extract from Dyer's report to the Army Council, we



are justified in assuming that the statements made therein had their influence in shaping this opinion. We have seen that those statements, as evidence, were of no value whatsoever. Mr. Justice McCardie's opinion was not a decisive verdict for Dyer and against the authorities who censured him ; it was the opinion of an individual and nothing more, and it was partly based on inconclusive evidence.

Outside the law Mr. Justice McCardie's opinion is of no more value than the opinion of any other intelligent human being.

The Judge claims to have had the advantage of being in possession of certain information which did not come to the notice of the Hunter Committee. On the other hand, the Hunter Committee had the advantage of seeing, and themselves examining some leading witnesses, including Dyer himself, who never appeared in Mr. Justice McCardie's court. And more than this, they were able to visit all the places where firing or trouble had occurred and to visualize the scenes on the spot.

The assistance which this personal inspection gave to the Committee in forming their judgments will be obvious to everybody who believes that the natural eye is a more accurate witness than its mental counterpart. Taking it by and large, it is questionable whether Mr. Justice McCardie was in a better or as good a position for making a correct appreciation of the events of the Jallianwala Bagh and other happenings in Amritsar connected with Dyer as were the Hunter Committee.

The Prime Minister said in the House of Commons, with reference to Mr. Justice McCardie's comment that Dyer was wrongly condemned by the Secretary of State: "It ought in fairness to be borne in mind that the objectionable passages occurred not in a considered written judgment, but in an oral charge to the Jury delivered at the conclusion of a lengthened and somewhat heated trial, and the very form in which it was couched shows that *the learned Judge was not informed as to what took place.*"

Before proceeding further it is necessary to turn to another incident which could not fail to influence the Government of India in forming its estimate of Dyer's conduct at Amritsar, and is not without significance in its bearing on Dyer's mentality during that period of stress and strain. His most vehement supporters have usually passed it lightly by as a matter of no particular importance. But no one has been able to find an excuse for it, and it had far-reaching results which will be dealt with later. It is what is generally known as "The Crawling Order."



AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE, BOMBAY

LADY MONRO

LADY WILLINGDON

SIR CHARLES MONRO

MAJOR BRIDGES

LORD WILLINGDON

MAJOR MUIR



Miss Sherwood, a missionary lady, while bicycling in a long and narrow street on April 10th, 1919, was brutally knocked over, beaten and left for dead. Nine days later Dyer issued an order that every Indian passing up or down the street should do so crawling on all fours. The inhabitants of the houses in the street were, as far as is known, all of them peaceful and loyal citizens who had not taken any part in the recent disturbances. There was never any proof or supposition that a single dweller in that street had any share in the attack on Miss Sherwood. The houses had no back exits and consequently the only way the inhabitants could go out to buy food or for any other purpose was by going on their hands and knees.

The order was senseless and unjust. It punished the innocent rather than the guilty and it was calculated to rekindle the passions which were fast dying down. It was not the inconvenience caused to the inhabitants who occupied the street which mattered so much as the humiliating nature of the order. After the order had been in force for ten days it came to the notice of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, who expressed his strong disapproval and ordered its withdrawal.

After the suppression of the disturbances in the Punjab, Dyer returned to the command of the Jullundur Brigade and took part in the third Afghan War. Later he was transferred to the command of a brigade at Jamrud.

Naturally the collection of information and the compilation and digestion of the reports dealing with the rebellion took some time before they were completed. Nevertheless it was unfortunate, and unfair to Dyer, that the Committee to investigate the disturbances in the Punjab, etc., was not appointed until October 14th, 1919. It held its first meeting on October 29th, 1919.

Following on the Committee's report the Government of India came to the conclusion that it was unable to condone the extreme measures which Dyer had adopted at the Jallianwala Bagh or the issue of the Crawling Order. It did not accuse him of "atrocities"; it acknowledged that he acted with integrity of purpose and in accordance with what he considered to be his duty, but it was unable to exonerate him from the commission of a grave error of judgment. In the words of Sir Charles Monro, "his motives and intentions in a position of much difficulty were beyond cavil, but he showed a great lack of discretion in the situation with which he was confronted. We expect our generals to display greater wisdom and a wider sense of proportion in periods of crisis, and he showed himself to be lacking in these essentials."

Dyer was ordered to report himself at Army Headquarters, where he was told by the Commander-in-Chief to resign the command of his brigade and that he would not be employed again in India.

This sentence is condemned by Dyer's apologists and those who support his action at the Jallianwala Bagh on the grounds that :

(a) It was unjust and undeserved.

(b) It was unnecessarily severe.

And Sir Charles Monro is included in the condemnation for having passed the sentence.

(a) It was unjust and undeserved, so it is said, because Dyer, rising to a great emergency and in face of immense risks, saved the lives of many European men and women, saved the Punjab, saved India. Instead of being punished he should have received the highest commendation from the authorities and been rewarded accordingly. That his action was first of all condoned by the Government and Commander-in-Chief and that he was subsequently broken at the instance of popular clamour.

The plain facts of the Jallianwala Bagh have already been set forth and need not be gone over again. It has been shown, a fact which is not generally known, or is overlooked or kept in the background, namely, that there were many occasions of firing during the Punjab disturbances and that all of them were upheld save that which occurred on April 13th at Amritsar. There was no bias in the minds of the higher Government authorities against firing on crowds when the circumstances clearly demanded it, and provided it was kept within the limits which are defined in the Manual of Military Law.

No other occasions of firing on crowds, except what occurred at the Jallianwala Bagh, were questioned by the Government of India. In fact, they received the stamp of approval in the general appreciation which was expressed in a Despatch of May 5th, 1920, as follows: "Reviewing the situation as a whole, we desire to express our great appreciation of the admirable conduct of the troops who were employed in the suppression of the outbreak. Leaving aside individual instances, which have already been noticed,<sup>1</sup> both officers and men acted with admirable restraint under most trying circumstances and the Government of India have nothing but praise and gratitude for the services which they rendered in suppressing disorder and restoring the peace of the country."

It has been shown that Dyer's force was not in peril, or that if

<sup>1</sup> These had nothing to do with firing on mobs.

it had been in any danger when the firing commenced the danger must have passed long before the firing ceased, and that as Dyer had made up his mind to fire beforehand, risk or no risk, without warning and continuously, it is on this last point and not on any other that he must be judged.

It has often been asserted, and the assertion as often accepted, that the exemplary manner in which Dyer dealt with the forbidden assembly at Amritsar had the effect of instantly quelling the disturbances. This view receives strong support from Sir Michael O'Dwyer's statement that he had "no hesitation in saying that General Dyer's action that day was the decisive factor in crushing the rebellion. . . ."

One is bound to respect the opinion of the late Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab both on account of his position and because he is Sir Michael O'Dwyer. At the same time it is permissible to point out that the disturbances did not instantly cease. There was mob violence and outrages at Gujranwala, Wazirabad, Akalgarh, Hafizabad, Sangla and Malakwal on dates later than that of the Jallianwala Bagh. On the other hand, disturbances had already ceased at Lahore, Viramgam, and other places before that date. Delhi and Ahmedabad had completely quieted down. It is, at least, arguable that what had occurred at those cities, with their large and easily inflammable populations, would occur in Amritsar and elsewhere.

The rebellion, or whatever people may choose to call it, was indeed burning itself out, as invariably happens when it is only the resultant of mistaken beliefs that injustice and oppression are being enacted which have no foundation in fact, or when it is not raised and directed by an organized conspiracy. There has never been any evidence that there was any conspiracy behind the disturbances of 1919. Everything goes to show that they were sporadic and the work of local agitators whose words gained additional weight from the fictitious tyrannies of the Rowlatt Act coupled with a wave of trade depression.

There have been riots recently in various parts of India. Europeans have been murdered, property destroyed, and attacks made on the police which have had to be repelled by fire. The origin of these outrages is the same as that which led to the disturbances of 1919, namely, the Civil Disobedience campaign of Mr. Gandhi and the propagation of false and mischievous reports of the misdeeds of a "Satanic" Government amongst an ignorant and credulous populace. In this later instance the uprisings have been started by a definite organization which has left no stone unturned in order to intensify and extend them.

But they have subsided and are dying out of themselves notwithstanding the fuel which is being expended for the purpose of keeping them alight.<sup>1</sup>

There are many who consider that sterner measures should have been adopted towards the leaders of the organization. None have come forward to propose that the turbulent conditions should be scotched by shooting down one or two crowds of people not actively engaged in hostilities, as a lesson and as a warning to the rest of India.

Assuming, however, that the shooting down of the people in the Jallianwala Bagh did actually quell an incipient rebellion, did Dyer thereby save the Punjab and India? It would be easier to reply to the question if those who hold this view had ever explained what they mean here exactly by the word "save." Do they mean that he saved the Punjab from further atrocities and destruction of property, or from an organized rebellion? Or India from a second mutiny? Or from an insurrection on a scale to threaten our supremacy in India?

It has been said already that no evidence has been forthcoming of any organization behind the disturbances or that they were anything more than sporadic outbursts. There was no mutiny because there was never any disaffection in the Army. And if the firing by fifty men sufficed to crush rebellion in the Punjab it is the best proof that with two hundred thousand troops in the country, assisted by artillery, aeroplanes and well-developed communications, there could not have been any military danger to India as a whole. At most therefore the suppression of the rebellion in the Punjab could only have meant the checking of some riots which might possibly have broken out in other parts of the Province.

It might be argued that even these limited ends justified the means employed by Dyer. This leads us to a consideration of the whole question from a broader standpoint.

Forty years ago a historian, writing of the British in India, was able to say "We have shed no blood except on the battlefield, and the blood we have shed there has been the blood of the oppressors of the people."

No longer, since the day of Jallianwala Bagh, are we able to claim this proud testimonial to the uprightness of our record in India. It would never have been possible to utter it had our rule depended on the power of the sword alone. Our position in India has been maintained on the surer ground of equity, justice and disinterestedness. We have made mistakes, but the intention

<sup>1</sup> Written during winter 1930-31.

behind them has been honest. It is true that we maintain armed forces in India and that their withdrawal would inevitably lead to bloodshed and anarchy. There must be armed forces, whether they be called police or soldiers is immaterial, behind every government for the purposes of law and order.

In India the military forces maintained solely for internal security are greater than will be found in most other countries, and this is attributable mainly to the fact that India is not a single nation. "It is," as described by Rabindranath Tagore, "many countries packed into one geographical receptacle."

But no great country has ever been ruled by an alien race permanently by force of arms alone. The attempt to maintain our position in India by physical means unsupported by the sanction of moral values would be a retrogression of humanity. Had it not been for the simple faith of the Indian masses in the honesty of purpose and for their reliance in the justice of the officials of one of the finest services that ever existed, the Indian Civil Service, together with those of its ancillary departments of public works, police, canals, forests, not twenty times the number of British bayonets there are in India could have kept us there during the last two hundred years.

Indians of all classes who did not happen to be drawn into the vortex of mass excitement and exasperation, deplored the murder of Europeans and the other crimes committed by the mobs in the Punjab and elsewhere. The bloodshed at the Jallianwala Bagh, the seemingly callous neglect of the wounded, and the humiliation of the Crawling Order came as a great shock to all that is best in Indian public opinion. And when Dyer's actions received the support of a considerable section of the British public and the approval of the House of Lords it is safe to say that there has been no incident in the history of India which has done more harm to British reputation for fair dealing and to British prestige. Its value for the purpose of anti-British propaganda is too obvious to require any emphasis.

The late Bishop of Madras, Bishop Whitehead, relates how some of his Indian friends, who were themselves high up in Government service and thoroughly loyal to the British Raj, told him "that they felt so bitterly on the subject that they could not trust themselves to speak about it in the presence of Europeans."

The well-known authority on Indian affairs, the late Sir Valentine Chirol, wrote in his book *India*: "It is difficult to believe that General Dyer's faith, however honestly held, in the expediency of preventive massacre in order to forestall possible or even



probable and grave trouble will ever commend itself to the British people.

"But upon Indians of all classes and creeds and races, with exceptions too rare to signify, Jallianwala Bagh and the Punjab events produced only one feeling of horror and indignation which, among the masses, found vent in a great outburst of racial hatred. None would believe that such things would ever have been done in any English town or in any possession of the British Crown with a white population, whatever provocation an unlawful assembly or an unruly mob might have offered, nor that if, *per impossibile*, they had been done, British public opinion would not have been as unanimous in reprobating them as Indian opinion was in this case."

Occasions do arise when it is not only permissible, it is the plain duty of an officer called out with troops in aid of civil power to shoot into a crowd in order to protect the lives and property of peaceful citizens, to uphold the authority of Government and in self-defence. It is not morally justifiable, in the name of political expediency or for any other reason, to kill people merely in order to give a lesson or a warning to others.

Bishop Whitehead gives an account in his book *Indian Problems* of a conversation he had with M. Clémenceau, a statesman who certainly did not permit sentimentalism to sway his actions or to colour his opinion. M. Clémenceau spoke freely to the Bishop about the British rule and confessed that his opinions had undergone a change during his tour in India. He came with the idea that the British were unsympathetic and harsh in their dealings with Indians and found to his surprise that ninety-five per cent. of the officials he met were sincerely trying to do all they could for the welfare of the people. He thought that there was no likelihood of the British Government being overthrown, "but," he added, "there must be no more Amritsars; you cannot rule India like that."

(b) Was Dyer harshly treated by the Authorities? Was his punishment too severe?

Of course, for those who still maintain that Dyer acted rightly at Amritsar, the question calls for no answer. Any punishment was too severe. Rather ought he to have received commendation and high reward. For those who consider that he committed an error of judgment and yet with the honest conviction that he was doing right, the answer can only be given when we have differentiated between the punishment which it is generally supposed was inflicted and that which he actually received.

The idea is prevalent that after Amritsar Dyer received promotion which, if not given as a reward for his services in suppressing a rebellion, was a certain sign that the authorities did not disapprove of the methods he had employed to secure that result, and that later, in weak and cowardly response to the demands of a number of Indian politicians, the Government of India together with the Commander-in-Chief turned round on Dyer, removed him from his appointment and denied him further employment. As a consequence he was deprived of the high commands which would otherwise certainly have come to him by right of his professional worth and record and his career as a soldier was ruined.

We will now see what was the true story of this part of the Dyer case. After Amritsar Dyer returned, as has been related (page 201), to the Jullundur Brigade and was subsequently transferred to the command of a brigade at Jamrud. The command of the 2nd Division becoming vacant Dyer was appointed to officiate in command of it, pending the appointment of a permanent commander. This has led to the impression that he was promoted. He was not promoted to this appointment; it fell to him during the period which elapsed between the departure of the divisional commander and the appointment of his permanent successor—a common incident in military life. As will shortly be seen, he never would have got the permanent command.

Meanwhile, the Hunter Committee report was published. It contained the opinion which is quoted on page 191. The Government of India concurred in this opinion and taking a comprehensive view of Dyer's transactions in Amritsar, as set forth in the preceding pages, found that he had committed a grave error of judgment. As expressed by Sir Charles Monro, "he did not show the wisdom and sense of proportion which is expected of officers in his position." Consequently, he was ordered to relinquish the command of his brigade and told he would receive no further employment.

Acts and omissions which would at worst be looked on as venial offences in civil life are often dealt with more severely in the Services and penalties are attached to them. Many officers in the Navy and Army have been obliged to resign on account of errors of judgment of far less consequence than that committed by Dyer, and sometimes with much more disastrous results to their careers. The sentence passed on Dyer carried with it no material loss or hardship. He was a good soldier of average ability who, at the time of his removal from the command of his

brigade, had already reached his limit. His military career was settled, not by the Government of India nor by Sir Charles Monro, the Commander-in-Chief, but by the Army Selection Board in India, which had decided that, on his military record, Dyer did not come up to the necessary standard for promotion to major general. He would, Amritsar or no Amritsar, never have received further employment or advancement in the Army.

Momentous acts are seldom barren ; the good produce more good and it is " the curse of all things evil " to produce more evil. One regrettable offspring from Jallianwala Bagh has been the attempts made by some of Dyer's upholders to strengthen their advocacy by lowering the credit of others, and by casting aspersions on the good faith of Sir Charles Monro, a man who put duty before every other consideration and whose feet never wandered from the way of judgment, equity and justice. Hence the unwelcome task has been imposed of criticizing and dissecting the least creditable episodes of the life of an honest soldier who is dead in order to vindicate the character of a very perfect knight who, too, has left this earth.

Some of these attempts will be exposed, by way of example, in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER XIII

*The Life of General Dyer.* Lines of attack. Comments. The Connaught Rangers. The application of the minimum force. Circumstances which justify an officer in firing. Conditions which, if observed, safeguard the officer who opens fire on mob. Mistaken historical analogies. Sir Henry Wilson's opinions. Dyer and the divisional command. Criticisms of Monro not justified by facts. Dyer's ineligibility for promotion. Monro and the Third Afghan War. What Lord Roberts would have done. Dyer's over-zealous apologists. The shadow of Amritsar.

THE publication which has done the most to colour the opinions of those people who are imperfectly acquainted with the facts of the Dyer case, and which has been the one source from which many have drawn their information, is a *Life of General Dyer* by Ian Colvin, published in 1919.

A writer who has a strong case is generally content to let the facts and the principal actors speak for themselves, and to make his deductions therefrom. A writer whose case is weak sometimes bolsters it up with various devices, one of the most common being to discredit the competence or the credentials of others who happen to appear on the stage. The method employed is to make a number of insinuations, which, if sufficiently numerous, cannot fail to leave their effect on the minds of the readers. There are several exhibitions of this device in the *Life of General Dyer*, but only the more important, or those which refer particularly to Sir Charles Monro, will be confuted.

An attempt is first of all made to disparage the Committee appointed to investigate the disturbances of 1919, before which Dyer, gave his evidence in India. The President of the Committee was the Honourable Lord Hunter—a distinguished lawyer and a Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland.<sup>1</sup> He is described in the *Life of General Dyer* as “a mild-mannered man, probably a little bemused by his political preconceptions and certainly disabled by his ignorance of the country, its languages and its people.”

It is puzzling to know what the author means in describing Lord Hunter as being “bemused by his political preconceptions.” What were these preconceptions? In what way did he show

<sup>1</sup> The equivalent of a Judge of the High Court in England.

himself bemused by them and what, if they existed, had they to do with the Dyer case? One might just as correctly say that Mr. Justice McCardie was "bemused by his political preconceptions." But one would not say it because one knows that in trying to arrive at the truth of any case which is before him, an English judge does not allow himself to be swayed the least bit by outside influences of any description. Is a Scotch judge to be credited with a smaller measure of impartiality and a narrower sense of justice than an English judge?

As to Lord Hunter's ignorance of the language and the people, the enquiry was held in English and practically all the witnesses could speak and understand English, and ignorance of Urdu was, therefore, no disqualification.

The author of the *Life of General Dyer* lays great stress on Mr. Justice McCardie's opinion, which has been cited in the last chapter, and yet Mr. Justice McCardie's practical knowledge of the country and its people was probably not greater than that of Lord Hunter.

Again: "There was no member of the Committee with any experience of the Punjab or the executive service." This is incorrect. Sir George Barrow had experience of the Punjab and Mr. Rice had very considerable executive experience.

And again, Mr. Rice "as Secretary in the Home Department could hardly be called independent of the Government of India." This remark is objectless unless it is taken to imply either that the Government of India exerted itself to create in Mr. Rice's mind a prejudice hostile to Dyer, or that because he was a member of the Government Secretariat, Mr. Rice's opinions would be guided not by what he thought was right, but by what he thought the Government wanted, in which case the remark, unbacked by any proof, is simply an impertinence. Mr. (now Sir Thomas) Smith is described as an "English merchant long resident in Lucknow" who "was evidently overawed by the company of lawyers in which he found himself." The absurdity of this description will be apparent to anyone acquainted with this shrewd and hard-headed man of business, who, it may be said in passing, was *not* long resident in Lucknow.

The author, not content with belittling the competency of the personnel of the Committee, goes on to cast doubts regarding the accuracy with which its proceedings were reported. He says: "At this point I may suggest a caution as to the record of the spoken evidence. . . . Thus, for example, on page 112 he (Dyer) is represented as saying, 'I have made up my mind that I would do all men to death if they were going to continue the meeting.'

General Dyer's annotation, 'I emphatically deny this,' has probability to support it, since it is difficult to imagine any Englishman using such a phrase as 'do all men to death' although it is easy to suppose an Indian babu putting such words in his mouth."

It is natural for a man not to be able to remember the exact words he has used during the course of a long verbal cross-examination, the more so if he possesses an excitable temperament, and when Dyer denied, in a marginal note, having said them no doubt he spoke in perfect good faith. As it happens, the writer of this biography was present when Dyer gave his evidence and was listening intently, in order not to miss any opportunity which might arise which would enable him, fairly, to be of assistance to Dyer.

He was struck by the peculiarity of the phrase, so that it has remained in his memory ever since. There is no doubt that Dyer uttered the words as reported.

The author of the *Life of General Dyer* next tells us that "on reading over Dyer's evidence I found remarks so extraordinary that I conclude they could not have been made by the witness. Thus, for example (on page 124 of the report), General Dyer is represented as saying of the prisoners in the Sherwood case, 'I did not know they would be found guilty; when they were not found guilty, I lashed them.' And he was 'puzzled by these and other remarks hardly less preposterous.' He is right as regards the remark quoted by him; it was not made by the witness. What was said appears in the following extract from the examination:

"Q. What certainty had you at the time you ordered them to be whipped at this spot that they would be found guilty of this offence against Miss Sherwood?

"A. I did not know they would be found guilty. I lashed them.

"Q. When they were lashed for a breach of Fort Discipline they were not yet found guilty of the crime against Miss Sherwood—these particular men?

"A. The chances were from what I had heard and been told that these were the particular men."

If, therefore, the author is puzzled it is only because he has read the published report incorrectly.

"After all," says the author, "it is not by what he said but by what he did he should be judged" and "was General Dyer condemned upon the facts or upon what he wrote or is alleged to have said? . . . General Dyer is, therefore, condemned upon his evidence—written and spoken."

If men were invariably judged by their deeds alone it would sometimes go hard with them. When it is a case of killing one's fellow-men the motive at the back of the deed cannot be ignored. A man kills another, is he to be judged by the deed alone? He must be judged according to the evidence, which may be circumstantial, but his motives can only be explained in speech or writing. For the deed may have been prompted by varying motives of revenge or greed, or in self-defence, or it may have been simply accidental.

The act of firing on a crowd of unresisting people, who are not engaged in any deeds of crime and violence, for ten minutes is, standing by itself, indefensible. It is only by knowing Dyer's motives, which cannot be arrived at except by hearing what he had to say and reading what he wrote, that any conclusion can be formed as to whether it was an act of wisdom or one of folly.

It comes to this, that when the evidence is given in India and before the Hunter Committee, what Dyer said and wrote need not, according to the author of the *Life of General Dyer*, be taken into account, but when it is given in England and in Mr. Justice McCardie's court it becomes matter of supreme importance.

One page out of the one hundred and thirty pages in the *Life of General Dyer* dealing with Dyer's doings at Amritsar is allotted to the notorious "Crawling Order." The page is labelled "A Minor Incident." The Secretary of State for India referring, in a Despatch, to this order writes, "Had the order been carried out as a punishment upon persons actually guilty of the crime which it was designed to stigmatize, it would have been difficult to defend; inflicted, as it was, upon persons who had no connection with that crime, with the object of impressing upon the public of Amritsar, through humiliation of those persons, the enormity of the crime committed by certain individuals of that public, the order offended against every canon of civilized government."

On page 238 of the *Life of General Dyer* occur the words: "Thus General Dyer with neither friend nor counsel to aid him, appeared before the Committee," and a leading daily paper, in an article written at the time of Dyer's death, remarks that "the soldier, himself, undefended by counsel was subjected without warning to the cross-examination of lawyers and was thus denied the legal rights which would have been given to a criminal."

It would be interesting to know who it was who denied Dyer the assistance of counsel. It was certainly not the Government of India, nor the Commander-in-Chief, nor the Hunter Committee. On the contrary, counsel was pressed on Dyer by the Government;

and his friends, knowing his tendency to excitability, begged him to accept the assistance that was offered him. Dyer obstinately refused, saying that he would and could conduct his own case. Neither was he cross-examined without warning. He had many days in which to prepare his evidence. As to friends ready to help him, they, too, were not wanting. The author of the *Life of General Dyer* himself mentions that General Beynon gave Dyer a friendly hint as he was going into the room where the Committee sat. And there was a friend on the Committee itself who was only too anxious to extend to him all the assistance that was possible, but Dyer never gave him half a chance. Dyer was at liberty to employ the services of counsel or of any of his friends in this capacity. Naturally, his friends could not take his place in the witness-box.

Enough has been said to disclose the methods which have been resorted to in order to create the impression that Dyer did not receive a fair hearing before the Hunter Committee.

On account of the influence the *Life of General Dyer* has had on the minds of a considerable number of people, one or two more examples will be given to show the misleading light in which this case has been exhibited, after which the reflections which constitute covert attacks on the character of Sir Charles Monro will be dealt with.

A footnote to the description given in the *Life of General Dyer*, of Dyer's departure from Jullundur, when the officers of the brigade went to the railway station to see him off, says, "All the officers (went to the station) except those of the Connaught Rangers, who had been forbidden by their Colonel. *The battalion, by the way, was shortly afterwards disbanded on account of mutiny.*"<sup>1</sup> The object in making this allusion is fairly obvious. It is, however, absolutely wrong in fact and is an unwarranted slur put on the name of a famous regiment which had a record of 129 years unbroken service. The regiment was disbanded in the summer of 1922, after its return to England. Its colours were received by His Majesty The King at Windsor from the hands of the commanding officer and representatives of the regiment on June 12th, 1922. The disbandment of all the Irish regiments (except those of Northern Ireland) including the Connaught Rangers was brought about by the establishment of the Irish Free State.

The Secretary of State for India wrote in a despatch: "It is certain that he (Dyer) made no attempt to ascertain the minimum

<sup>1</sup> My italics. The heading of the page on which this footnote occurs is "The Naughty Connaughts."



amount of force which he was compelled to employ, that the force which he actually employed was greatly in excess of that required to achieve the dispersal of the crowd, and that it resulted in lamentable and unnecessary loss of life and suffering."

Nothing could be plainer. The author of the *Life of General Dyer* travesties the Secretary's words by saying that "they suggested there was an appropriate dose for every emergency which must be ascertained or applied," and that "the dose must be exquisitely estimated, not too large for actual results, nor too small for actual contingencies, weighed out with one eye on what had occurred and with the other on what might happen." The words meant nothing more than they said and are in strict conformity with the principle of the application of the minimum force as laid down in the Manual of Military Law, where we read that "if resort be had to force, the principle is that so much force only is to be used as is sufficient to effect the object in view, namely, the dispersion of the assembly."

Looked at in the light in which the author of the *Life of General Dyer* wishes his public to see it, the application of the principle of the minimum of force would be a matter of insuperable difficulty, and even then, it would be the Manual of Military Law and not the Secretary of State who one would have to blame for enunciating it. In actual practice, it is not difficult.

In some thirty other cases during the Punjab disturbances, officers, both military and police, were able to apply the principle of minimum force without difficulty, and there seems no reason why Dyer should not have been able to do the same. But he said himself, that he meant to apply the maximum force. The author's criticism of the Despatch of the Secretary of State falls, therefore, to the ground.

It has been repeatedly said that officers to-day are afraid to take action against rebellious or riotous crowds lest they should meet with the same fate that befell Dyer. If this is really the case it is extremely unfortunate. The responsibility for it, however, must lie not with the authorities who censured Dyer, but is due to the publicity which the case has attracted, to the exclusion of those thirty odd instances when firing on crowds was held by the authorities to be justified in all respects.

It cannot be repeated too often that if an officer orders a riotous assembly to disperse and it does not comply after reasonable warning, he is justified in opening fire and in continuing to fire until he sees that his order is being obeyed. If he gives notice of his intention to fire and his warning is disregarded, he may commence firing and continue firing for just so long as is necessary

to ensure compliance with his order. If he acts in this spirit he will not be judged too strictly by the letter, and instead of being condemned, his conduct will surely meet with the approval of the higher military authorities and of the Government.

"We must always try to judge men and events in their historical setting if we are to be just in retrospect," says the author of the *Life of General Dyer*. This is true. We may also say that in drawing historical parallels the events which we describe should have some similarity. The author, in support of the happenings at Amritsar, gives historical instances which bear no resemblance to what occurred in India. For example, he relates of the 13th Vendémiaire that "60,000 sectionnaires under arms had the Convention at their mercy. There was nothing to oppose them save Napoleon with one gun loaded with grape and a handful of brigands."

What really happened was that four or five thousand troops of the line assisted by between one and two thousand gendarmes with some patriots and Invalides (the handful of brigands!) were opposed by about thirty thousand National Guards. Murat had secured for Bonaparte the artillery from the camp at Sâblons and Bonaparte had disposed these guns to bear on the columns that threatened the streets leading to the Tuileries. The two parties faced each other for some considerable time when shots fired from some houses gave the signal for the commencement of a pitched fight between them, the National Guards firing from behind barricades and from the neighbouring houses until they were forced to give way before the grapeshot of the guns and the volleys of the regular troops. The casualties amounted to about two hundred on each side.

Could anything be more unlike the setting in which the Jallian-wala Bagh tragedy was performed and its final scene; anything more dissimilar than the origins, purposes and ultimate results of these two events?

Again, a comparison is made between the Punjab disturbances of 1919 and the Moplah Rebellion of 1921. If events should be judged in their historical setting, it is no less essential that military events should be judged in their topographical setting. It is inferred in the *Life of General Dyer* that if the Amritsar methods had been adopted in the Moplah uprising the rebellion would have been suppressed in a few weeks instead of lasting as it did for a year, at a cost of far fewer lives and far less suffering.

All that need be said about this is that if the Moplah Rebellion had taken place in an open country like the plains of the Punjab, with its ample communications and numerous military canton-

ments, it would have been suppressed just as quickly as were the Punjab disturbances, without having to resort to a Jallianwala Bagh. It was the physical difficulties of the country and the absence of communications, and not any undue leniency in dealing with the rebels, which lengthened the time taken to stamp out the Moplah Rebellion.

Much is made in the *Life of General Dyer* of some excerpts from the Diary of the late Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson. It is as well, therefore, to make it clear that the objections they contain are only directed against the Army Council being required to give a decision on the case before all the papers had been placed before it. Sir Henry Wilson and the Army Council very properly refused to prejudge the case without having had a chance of seeing the evidence and before Dyer had been given every opportunity of defending himself. There is nothing in Sir Henry Wilson's diary to show that, after he had seen all the papers on the subject, including the Hunter Committee and Dyer's reports, he did not agree with the opinions and the disciplinary measures taken by the Commander-in-Chief in India.

From his after silence, following on his attitude before seeing the papers, one might rather make the assumption that Sir Henry Wilson, on a full review of the circumstances, had come to the same conclusions as Sir Charles Monro. This is borne out by the following statement which the Secretary of State for War made in a speech in the House of Commons. "With regard to the decision of the Army Council, they came to the following conclusion: The Army Council have considered the report of the Hunter Committee together with the statement which Brigadier General Dyer has, by their directions, submitted to them. They consider that in spite of the great difficulties of the position in which this officer found himself on April 13th, 1919, at Jallianwala Bagh, he cannot be acquitted of an error of judgment. They observe that the Commander-in-Chief in India has removed Brigadier General Dyer from his employment and that he has been informed that no further employment will be offered him in India. . . . These decisions the Army Council accept."

We now come to the allegations in the *Life of General Dyer* which are made directly against Sir Charles Monro. The first of these occurs on pages 251 and 252, and in order to make clear its nature it is necessary to quote at some length. It says that on January 30th, 1920, Dyer, who was at this time on leave at Jullundur, received the following message:

(1) His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief approves of Brigadier General R. E. H. Dyer officiating in command of the



THE KHYBER, 1918  
*A British soldier guards the Pass.*



2nd Division vice Major General Sir Charles Dobell appointed to exercise command Northern Command pending further orders.

(2) Authority. M.S. Chief's telegram No. 10869/3 of 28.1.20.

"This was obviously a very important step in promotion; the officiating command carried with it in the normal course the substantive succession, and the 2nd Division, with its Headquarters at Rawalpindi, close to the frontier,<sup>1</sup> was one of the most important in the Indian army. But then came a blow, both heavy in itself and ominous of worse. On February 14th General Dyer received two further telegrams. In the first, 'Chief approves Brigadier General Caulfield continuing in command 2nd Division until Major General Sheppard takes over' . . . 'in view of the above Brigadier General Dyer will not now take up command of the division on his return from leave.'

"General Dyer was not to get his division after all; for some reason or other the Commander-in-Chief had changed his mind. General Dyer received these telegrams in hospital at Jullundur, but his illness would hardly by itself account for the decision. It may be only an odd coincidence that on February 18th, 1920, only four days later, the following question and answer appeared in the proceedings of the Imperial Legislative Council:

"The Honourable Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda asked:

"A. Is it a fact that General Dyer received promotion after the firing at the Jallinawala Bagh?

"B. Will the Government be pleased to state the different posts and places to which he was appointed after the said firing?

"His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief replied:

"A. The answer is in the negative.

"B. It would serve no useful purpose to enumerate either the posts or places where General Dyer has served since the firing at Amritsar. He is now commanding a brigade at Jamrud."

"The custom is to give notice of such questions some days beforehand. Could it be that Sir Charles Monro's right-about-turn of February 14th was effected by the challenge of Babu Kamini Kumar Chanda? If it were so, then never before had the Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's armies in India beat so precipitate a retreat before so insignificant an enemy."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> One hundred and twenty-five miles from the nearest point on the frontier!

<sup>2</sup> This of the man who in Gallipoli stood by his opinion in the face of Lord Kitchener, Mr. Churchill, Lord Curzon and the majority of the British Cabinet.

And on the very next page, in shamefaced apology for innuendoes so fantastical: "It is, of course, possible, and indeed probable, that as General Dyer was unfit for his duties at that time, his immediate superior reported adversely on his work to the Commander-in-Chief, whose decision may have been based on that ground."

If your major premises are wrong, your deductions and all that comes after will also be wrong. The *Life of General Dyer* in this question of the promotion of Dyer to the command of a division starts off with two wrong premises and therefore all it says afterwards regarding Sir Charles Monro's "change of mind," "right-about-turn" and "precipitate retreat" is wrong also—wrong and unjust.

The first false notion lies in the statement that "the officiating command carried with it in the normal course the substantive succession." It did not necessarily do anything of the sort. It is true that an officer holding an officiating appointment often does succeed to the permanent incumbency, but just as often he does not. Officiating appointments are constantly made in the Army whereby an officer temporarily holds a higher command than his own during the absence, on leave or on account of sickness or for any other causes, of the permanent commander, or to hold a vacancy pending the arrival of the officer permanently appointed to the command. This was the nature of Dyer's officiating appointment which, when Dyer went sick, was taken up in the normal course by the next senior officer, Brigadier General Caulfield, until the arrival of Major General Sheppard.

The second mistaken assumption is that Dyer was designated for the permanent command of the 2nd Division, until the publication of the Hunter Committee Report, or the questions asked in the Legislative Assembly caused the Commander-in-Chief to change his mind. A division is a major general's command. Dyer was not a major general, for a reason entirely unconnected with Amritsar or the Punjab disturbances, as explained on page 208, and he never would have become one. He was, therefore, not eligible, in any circumstances, to hold the permanent command of the 2nd Division.

This clumsy attempt to discredit Sir Charles Monro falls flat directly the rottenness of the foundations on which it is built is exposed to view.

As to the suggestion that the Commander-in-Chief "beat a retreat" before the challenge of Babu Kamini Kumar Chanda and allowed political interests to influence his treatment of Dyer, the hollowness of the charge having been disclosed all that need

be said is that it is a poor trick to try and strengthen one's arguments by publicly attributing despicable motives to a man without having a single fact or scrap of evidence to support the accusation.

On page 256 of the *Life of General Dyer* certain telegrams from the Northern Command to Dyer are quoted. The apparently contradictory nature of these orders is understandable by any one acquainted with official routine, and need not be gone into here. But when the author of the *Life of General Dyer* says: "I am unable to explain these curious and contradictory orders which suggest that the Commander-in-Chief, in his sudden and belated excess of moral indignation at the events of Amritsar, thought it necessary to be discourteous to General Dyer," it looks as if he did not know that the Commander-in-Chief and the Northern Army Commander were two different persons. This is, at any rate, the kindest interpretation of what otherwise would appear to be a contortion of facts designed with the object of imputing discourtesy to Sir Charles Monro.

Page 319 of the *Life of General Dyer*, which is headed "An Ingenuous Revelation," is devoted to the relation of certain events and decisions connected with the Third Afghan War, with no other object apparently than to bring contempt on Sir Charles Monro.

Again, for the sake of clarity, it is necessary to quote at some length. We are informed on page 318 that:

"The British public has been allowed to hear very little of that third war with Afghanistan. . . . It would no doubt have been inconvenient to the Coalition Government had it been known that Moscow was concerned in the attack. . . . It would, besides, have been difficult to find any creditable reason for the political interference in the course of that campaign when our victorious armies were kept for months on the passes of the Pamirs and the Hindu Kush while our agents negotiated with an enemy who lay at their mercy, and who used the time thus given to incite the tribes to ambush convoys and massacre isolated garrisons.

"There is no dispute here as to the facts; the truth is ingenuously revealed by the Commander-in-Chief, who does not appear even to realize the shame of the story he tells. How the Afghan armies were defeated . . . how everything was ready for the advance 'when the Amir's request for negotiations rendered any further movement politically inexpedient.' . . . How the troops suffered great disadvantage as the result of the political situation . . . from the granting of the armistice at the beginning of June to the signing of peace on August 8th . . . all these



shameful circumstances are complacently narrated by Sir Charles Monro. Lord Roberts of Kandahar would rather have resigned his commission than have submitted to such political meddling with the conduct of a campaign."

"There is no dispute here as to facts"—this confident assertion is open to considerable dispute, and in placing "our victorious armies on the Pamirs and the Hindu Kush" and therefore a long way north of Kabul, the author of the *Life of General Dyer* knocks the bottom out of his own arguments. We may let this geographical inexactitude pass and go on to ask by what right shame is called at a Commander-in-Chief for relating in an official despatch that political consideration had intervened to prevent a continuance of the military operations.

The Secretary of State for India had directed that any operations which might have to be undertaken on the Frontier were to be of a defensive nature, and that if in the course of operations an offensive became necessary it was to be strictly limited.

What was the Commander-in-Chief to do? Was he to flout the orders of both the Home Government and the Government of India? Was he to order his troops to continue their advance after the Government had ordered them to stand still? Or should he have resigned his appointment, or even his commission, which, one infers from the remark concerning Lord Roberts, is what the author considers he should have done. A commander who is ordered to carry out a plan which will, in his opinion, end in disaster is justified in asking that the plan shall be altered, or in the alternative, that he may be relieved of his command. But on a matter of policy it is his duty to obey the Government which he serves.

Many of our greatest soldiers and sailors have, from time to time, been in personal opposition to the policy of the Government of the day, but we do not read that they therefore resigned their commissions. Lord Roberts of Kandahar, one of the most loyal servants the Crown ever had, knew his duty better than the author of the *Life of General Dyer* seems to think.

This review of the Dyer case is ended. It has not been animated by contentious sentiment or any desire to traduce the reputation of an honest soldier, whose fault lay in a failure to show, in a difficult situation, the judgment which is required in the Army of an officer of his rank. He acted in good faith, and if some of his apologists had credited those whose duty it was to remove Dyer from a position of responsibility with a like degree of good faith, the case need never have been recalled. But because there are some who in their zeal in the cause of Dyer have thought fit

to speak ill of those who condemned him, it has been necessary to show up the unfairness of their allegations.

When visiting India in 1921 the Duke of Connaught found "the shadow of Amritsar lengthened over the whole of India." In the heat of controversy, let not the shadow of injustice fall on one who, like Dyer, tried to do his duty to the State. With what measure of judgment and equity he succeeded must be left to the reader of these pages to decide for himself.

## CHAPTER XIV

Sir Hamilton Grant's appreciation. The Third Afghan War. Adverse conditions. A notable achievement. Conduct of the war criticized. A difficult situation. Monro's praise of subordinates and ruling chiefs. Trouble in Waziristan. Sir Henry Dobbs' appreciation. Monro the originator of the new frontier policy. Mr. Montagu. Snowden. Love of children. Report on Waziristan operations.

WE have seen the outlines of Sir Charles Monro's arduous labours in India during the period of the Great War, and something of the broadmindedness, judgment and foresight that he displayed in dealing with the varied and intricate problems which confronted him at every turn. But he possessed something else besides these qualities of mind, without which he could not have overcome the manifold difficulties which beset him in the course of his daily round of care and responsibility. We find this "something" in his personality.

Sir Hamilton Grant,<sup>1</sup> the Foreign Secretary whose work brought him in close touch with the Commander-in-Chief, has communicated to the writer the following illuminating appreciation of Sir Charles: "At a time when the shadow of the fall of Kut and the débâcle in Mesopotamia lay dark over India, the advent of Sir Charles Monro, with his cheery optimism, seemed to breathe new life into us all. Combining as he did, a breezy bonhomie and an unquenchable sense of humour with the iron discipline of his beloved old regiment, The Queen's, he was the right man in the right place at the right time.

"Ever since the time of Clive and Warren Hastings there has been, and still is, in India a natural, an inevitable sub-current of antagonism between civil and military, between soldier and political. There is no need here to analyse the causes of this feeling or to argue the rights and wrongs of the attitude on either side. The plain fact remains that not infrequently, even during the Great War, when all such petty differences should have been sunk, the rift led to imperfect co-operation. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Sir Hamilton Grant, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., Foreign Secretary to the Government of India in 1918 and afterwards Chief Commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province.

" Sir Charles Monro knew India, and he knew this feeling and he would have none of it. From the moment he arrived, he insisted that in the case of all civil officers concerned there should be complete frankness, that all the cards should be laid on the table and that we should co-operate together with the fullest knowledge of the facts. This led, not only to the most agreeable, but also to the most successful working.

" The new Chief was a tiger for work. He was at his table at the Army Department by nine o'clock every morning and seldom left it till it was time to dress for dinner. Almost every day I was invited to attend an informal conference in his room at which the Chief of the Staff, Sir George Kirkpatrick, the Director of Military Operations, General Skeen, and often several others were present.

" The immediate problems arising in Afghanistan, the North-West Frontier, Baluchistan, Persia and the Persian Gulf, Arabia, Mesopotamia and many other distant regions were discussed, a line of action was concerted and generally a telegram was drafted for despatch or for submission to the Viceroy, or to the Council. In these discussions nothing could exceed the kindly courtesy invariably shown by Sir Charles Monro, or the patience with which he would listen to arguments opposed to his own views. Over us all he exercised an extraordinarily safe and steady influence.

" Many of the questions were completely new to him, but his native Scotch shrewdness stood him in good stead ; he was quick to see a flaw in argument and could demolish sophistry with horse-sense in terms often more crisp than parliamentary. He did not suffer fools gladly but anything in the nature of ' cleverness ' annoyed him beyond measure. He was a very direct man dealing in a straightforward way with plain facts. It is not for a layman to offer an opinion on the work of a great soldier, but throughout, I could not but be struck by the consistency of his military policy, by his infinite pains as to every detail of organization and commissariat and by his persistent refusal to be dragged into wasteful and unnecessary commitments. His adherence to the policy of his predecessor to maintain, at all costs, adequate military strength on the North-West Frontier undoubtedly assisted the Amir Habibullah to remain true to his word and to keep Afghanistan neutral till the War was over.

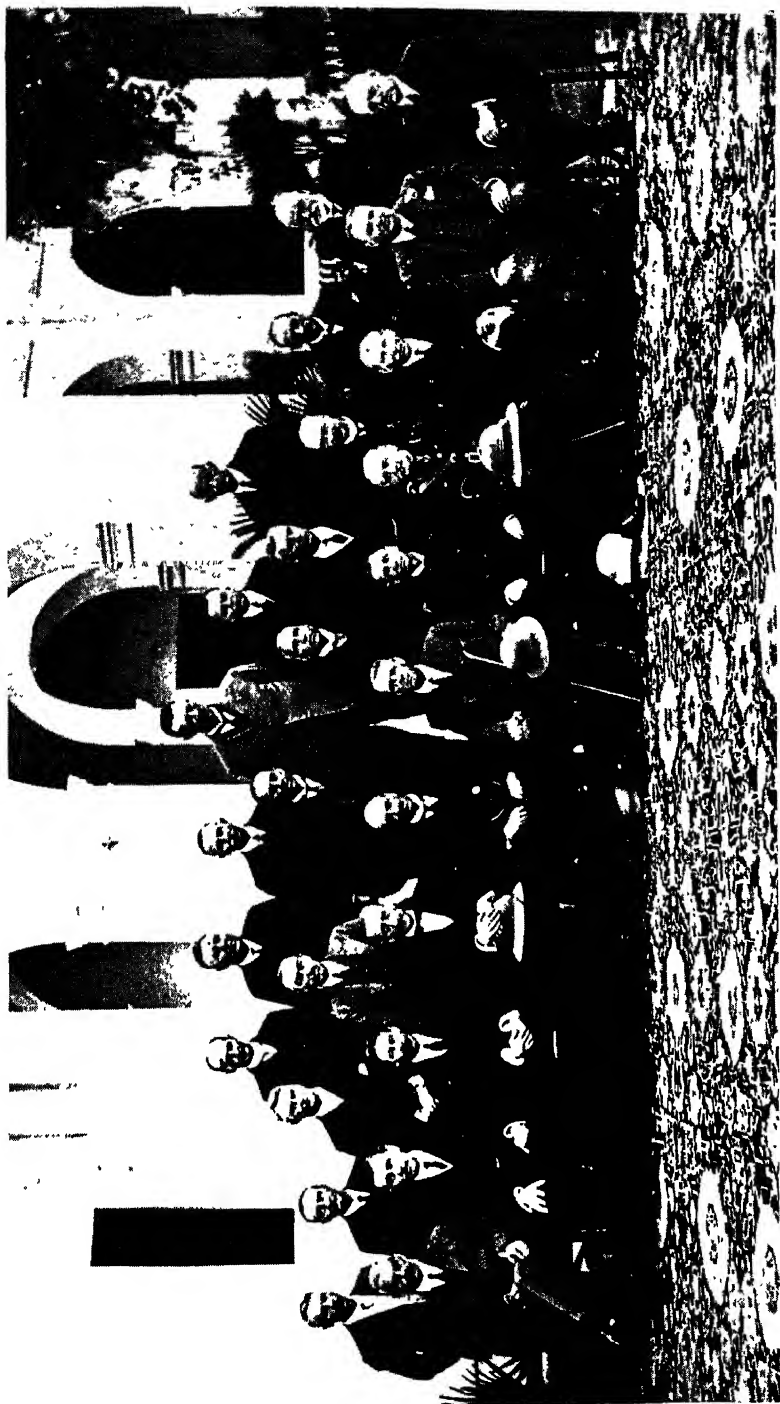
" The daring action of the Commander-in-Chief in sending a mission through Persia to Russian Turkestan on the far side of Afghanistan in the late stages of the War contributed materially

to the same result, for the Chief realized very fully what an unspeakable complication it would have meant had Afghanistan and the tribes come in against us while we were still in the throes of the Great War. Few people at the time understood what this would mean, and few to-day appreciate the debt that our country owes in the matter to the Government of India for their wise diplomacy, to the Commander-in-Chief for his ready military co-operation and military precautions, or to the unhappy Amir Habibullah, who was murdered, a martyr to his own good faith to us.

"Of the crazy Third Afghan War that was forced on us some six months after the close of the Great War by the folly of Amanullah and the impetuosity of his commanders, there is little to say. The Commander-in-Chief was confronted with a situation that must at any time have been serious, but at that particular juncture was doubly so owing to lack of transport due to the demands of other theatres, owing to the indifferent quality of a great number of the newly-raised regiments and owing to the reluctance of many of the British troops to be detained longer on foreign service. Had a rapid advance been made on Jalalabad it would have probably settled the business at once, but in the circumstances this was not possible. It was satisfactory that Amanullah soon came to his senses and begged for an armistice, to be followed soon afterwards by a permanent peace.

"I shall always look back on those days as the most interesting and perhaps indeed, in spite of the tense environment, as the happiest in my life. And this was due in a great measure to the charm of working with a chief who was so sympathetic and understanding, so wise and honest, and above all had the delightful quality of always seeing the humorous side even in the most disquieting situation. He was only angry with me once and that was when he thought that I spoke disparagingly of the conduct of the Waziristan operations. For he was fanatically loyal to those who served under him. His wrath was truly alarming, but I soon satisfied him that he had, to a great extent, misunderstood me, and our friendship was restored.

"Socially, Sir Charles and his charming lady were an enormous asset to us all in Simla and Delhi, though social functions on the former scale were, of course, in abeyance. But at the little dinners at Snowden he radiated kindness and humour and evoked the best in others. He could tell and enjoy a good story with the best. I remember once when certain engineering operations were being carried out on the Euphrates and the stream suddenly changed its course, as Eastern rivers do, rendering the work



GROUP AT DELHI, DURING THE VISIT OF MR. MONTAGU, SECRETARY OF STATE, TO INDIA  
*Front row (second from left). LORD MESTON, LORD RONALDSHAY, LORD WILLINGTON, MR. MONTAGU, LORD CHELMSFORD,  
LORD PENTLAND, SIR CHARLES MONRO, SIR MICHAEL O'DWYER*



migratory, the old chief, on hearing the report said, 'That damned river is a harlot, she changes her bed every night.'

"One of the happiest recollections is a visit that Sir Charles and Lady Monro paid us in Peshawar when in the privacy of some little intimate parties he allowed himself to become the boy that in many ways he remained until the end. We had a competition of guessing the names of old songs played on the piano. To everyone's surprise, Sir Charles was the winner. The pianist at once struck up 'See the Conquering Hero comes' and the Commander-in-Chief danced a spirited little *pas seul*! The morning they left us we received the following telegram from Nowshera, 'With reluctant but grateful hearts our reluctant bodies are being conveyed away from Peshawar'—a very charming, if not a very grammatical farewell from one of the most lovable personalities it has been my good fortune to know."

In 1917 Mr. Montagu visited India on his self-imposed mission to initiate the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. He had several conversations with the Commander-in-Chief on Army matters. He seems to have conceived a sincere liking and admiration for Sir Charles, who is one of the few men with whom he was brought into contact in India who is neither satirized nor lampooned in Mr. Montagu's recently published diaries. Sir Charles, on his part, recognized Mr. Montagu's abilities, but appears to have had a sensation of walking on unsafe ground when in company with the late Secretary of State, for he said to a friend: "Whenever I am talking to Mr. Montagu he puts his hand on my shoulder and I feel that he is leading me quietly towards a precipice, over which he will gently push me when we arrive at the edge."

The Third Afghan War was a very different affair from its two predecessors. On those occasions it was the British who invaded Afghanistan; in this case it was the Afghans who invaded India. But, whereas in the former instances the British armies went to Kabul and Kandahar, in 1919 the Afghans succeeded in penetrating only a few miles into British territory, to be hurled back over the frontier at the first encounter.

There never was a war started with so little reason and with so small a prospect of success. If the question had been asked to-day: "What king going to make war against another king sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh with twenty thousand," the answer would have been "Amanullah, late King of Afghanistan"!

It is true Amanullah had been misled by his agents into believing that all India would rise in rebellion directly his troops crossed



the frontier, and he was influenced by the militant party, who were excited by the Bolshevik anti-British propaganda which flooded the bazaars of Kabul. But he had no quarrel with us and if he was fit to be the occupant of a throne he should have been aware that a tempestuous, but momentary blast from the Afghan Hills, far from uprooting the British Raj, would do little more than create a rustle among its topmost branches.

It must, however, be admitted that Amanullah had a difficult rôle. He was little more than a boy. He had to play the part of the good Muslim, a leader of Islam and the Protector of the Frontier tribes, at a period when Moslem feeling was much concerned over the future of Turkey. In addition, his personal ambitions as to the future of his country inclined him to acts of indiscretion in his endeavours to govern a very difficult people.

Although Amanullah was not capable of inflicting any permanent injury to the health of India, the time and circumstance of the Afghan eruption was such as to cause a considerable amount of discomfort and uneasiness in India's internal organs.

India had been gradually drained for the past four years of her resources in men and all the details needed by a modern army. Articles such as electrical appliances and engineering stores, which were only procurable from the United Kingdom, could not be replenished owing to shortage of shipping. Eight infantry divisions and three cavalry divisions were still being maintained overseas and consequently there was a shortage of commanders, staff officers, medical, ordnance, engineer and supply and transport personnel of all grades, not including railway and other officials. The civil departments were undermanned owing to the number of officials who had been withdrawn for military duty.

A large number of men had been released immediately after the Armistice for indispensable services at home and in India. This threw an extra strain on those who remained. For example, the British ranks of the mechanical transport were twenty per cent. below strength when the Afghan War broke out and could not be replaced during the course of operations. Since the declaration of the Armistice Army Headquarters had been much occupied in the demobilization of British troops, and arrangements had been completed to give the Indian troops their well-earned furlough. The troops in the Punjab had been engaged in suppressing the recent disorders, and were distributed in small detachments which hindered rapid mobilization. Railway and telegraph communications had been dislocated.

It was at this period that the Afghans commenced hostilities.

They gave no warning. They occupied the heights in the Khyber Pass dominating Landi Kotal. The loyalty of the Khyber Rifles, who guarded the pass, proved unequal to the strain and they deserted to a man. Simultaneously the Peshawar district broke out into active disorder. The tribesmen showed open sympathy with the Afghans and unrest prevailed along the whole frontier from Peshawar to Quetta.

There was no time to be lost. Army Headquarters assumed the functions of General Headquarters. Mobilization commenced immediately. The field army maintained in India at this time for the defence of the frontier was composed of four divisions, three frontier brigades and four cavalry brigades. These formations had suffered from the demands made upon them to supply additional units and draft reinforcements for overseas forces and efficiency was lowered in proportion. There was also a considerable deficiency in medical and engineering personnel. In spite of all difficulties and drawbacks, mobilization proceeded rapidly.

In the Afghan War of 1878 and in the Tirah campaign of 1897, when India was enjoying internal tranquillity, eight weeks elapsed between the issue of orders to concentrate and the advance of our forces over the frontier. In 1919, two weeks only elapsed between receipt of the impending Afghan attack and the defeat of the main Afghan army. Actually, on the eighth day of mobilization our troops occupied Dacca and the Amir appealed for an armistice. To attack and disperse a hostile army forty-five miles from railhead, in appalling conditions of heat, within eight days of the opening of hostilities, was a notable achievement.

The strength of the British and Indian forces engaged north of the Indus amounted at one time to 340,000 men and 185,000 animals. The problem of supplying these numbers was not an easy one and the depleted state of the transport added to the difficulties. The soundness of General Monro's policy as regards the improvement of the roads in the North-West Frontier Province and the construction of new roads to carry mechanical transport (see page 172) now became evident. Upwards of five hundred tons of supplies and stores were transported daily from Peshawur and Jamrud through the Khyber, a performance which was only made possible through Sir Charles' foresight.

As far as the comfort of the soldiers, both British and Indian, was concerned, every possible precaution was adopted to mitigate the effects of the climate. Cattle were conveyed as far forward as Chaman, Tank, Bannu, Miranshah and Dacca, in order to

provide fresh milk for the hospitals. Ice factories were opened at several places along the Frontier. An improved ration was issued to British and Indian soldiers and included an abundance of fresh and canned fruits. At all important railway stations and posts on the lines of communication, special canteens were opened to cater for officers, non-commissioned officers and private soldiers, both British and Indian. The hospitals were amply provided.

It has been mentioned that there was a shortage of medical personnel and naturally the hospitals fared according to the capacity of the officers in charge, and were, in some cases, capable at first of improvement. But, taken generally, they were an immense improvement on the medical arrangements of previous frontier campaigns.

India had been confronted with a situation graver than anything she had been required to face since the Mutiny. Her Army was involved in responsibilities overseas the like of which had never before been imposed on it. She had been bled white by the Great War. The internal situation, the climate, the comparative inexperience of the troops—everything was against her. In spite of all these burdens and while still retaining a number of mobile brigades for internal defence and as a general reserve, she placed one hundred and forty thousand fighting men on the Frontier within a fortnight of the outbreak of hostilities, and a week and a day after the order to mobilize had inflicted a defeat on the enemy which virtually terminated the war.

The Amir had placed great reliance on the assistance he would receive from the Afridis, Mohmands and other formidable frontier tribes. There is little doubt that his expectations would have been realized had it not been for the prompt action taken by the Government of India and the rapidity with which the mobilization was completed by the military authorities. The suddenness of our advance, driven as it was between the territories of the Afridis and the Mohmands, divided these two influential tribes from each other. It prevented an Afghan-tribal combination and thus averted a long and costly war which would have followed on the loss of the Khyber Pass.

There was fighting at other points along the Frontier, in the Kurram, in Waziristan, at Chaman, in Baluchistan, and there were determined but unsuccessful attacks made by tribesmen on some of the Khyber posts. But the Amir's light-hearted visions of success vanished with the defeat of his troops in the Khyber. The "insubstantial pageant" of a victorious Afghan army marching through India amid the acclamations of its grateful

inhabitants was replaced by the substantial reality of a British army, seated on his own territory, menacing Jalalabad, and even threatening to occupy his capital.

This is not the place for a history of the Afghan War ; attention has, therefore, been confined to those parts in the plan of campaign for which Sir Charles Monro, in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief at the General Headquarters, was more immediately responsible.

The Afghan War, following directly after the World Conflict, and bearing a minute significance in comparison, passed almost unnoticed by the British public. It is not going too far to say that numbers of people never heard of it, or if they did, it was only for the information to pass in at one ear and out at the other. It is not surprising that men's minds should have been occupied at that time as exclusively with peace thoughts as during the previous four and a half years they had been occupied by war thoughts. The reaction was inevitable. A clash of arms on the distant Afghan border was too remote, the opponents too puny to trouble those who had been engaged for years in fighting the greatest military powers in the world, on a battle-field one-fifth the distance from their own homes that there is between Delhi and Calcutta.

The abnormal conditions, already mentioned, which hampered mobilization ; the fighting often severe and at close quarters ; the hardships endured by the troops on account of the terrible heat and all its concomitant discomforts ; the swift assembly of men and means at the decisive points, with a sureness immeasurably superior to anything of the sort which India had ever done before ; these are circumstances which have never received the recognition they deserved. On the contrary, what attention they did receive, outside official circles, savoured more of carping criticism than of praise.

There are certain disgruntled sons of Belial whose delight it is to try and find blemishes in every great man and in every good work. When they fail to find any they invent some. The conduct of the Third Afghan War did not escape. Three causes for criticism were pitched on :

(a) That the transport arrangements broke down.

If this had been true, it would have been excusable, seeing the extent to which India had been emptied of transport animals and vehicles during the preceding four years. That they did not break down is sufficiently proved by the fact that five hundred and forty tons of supplies were carried daily through the Khyber, by motor transport alone.

(b) That after the fighting at Dacca, the wounded were left out on the battle-field for some days.

This is simply untrue. All the wounded were in bed in the station hospital at Peshawar within eight hours after the combat had ceased.

(c) That arrangements to cope with an outbreak of cholera were inadequate.

Cholera was raging throughout the Frontier. It appeared at Quetta, Tank, Ali Musjid, Nowshera and other places. Water was scarce on certain stretches along the lines of communication, for the only reason that God had made it scarce. Everyone who has had to deal with Indian followers will appreciate the impossibility of preventing them from drinking any water along the roadside which they could get hold of, no matter what its source, in the raging heat which prevailed.

The critics, unable to make a good case on this point, said next, that the military authorities should have taken steps to develop the water supply in the Khyber beforehand in anticipation of possible contingencies. The advisability of doing this had been urged by the General Staff in 1916 and again in 1917. Unfortunately the source of supply lay within the territory of the Kuki Khel section of the Afridis. Sir George Roos-Keppel, the experienced Chief Commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province, was confident that the Kuki Khels would never give up their rights to this water, on which their existence depended, for any monetary compensation whatever. Forcible acquisition would have stirred up the whole Afridi tribe with almost a certainty of the conflagration spreading throughout the frontier and into Afghanistan. Political objections overruled military requirements. There can be no question that the political view was correct. As the Government of India rightly said, "An Afghan War in 1919 without adequate water arrangements was an infinitely lesser evil than an Afghan War in 1916, 1917 or 1918 brought on by water arrangements, however perfect they may have been."

One difficult situation arose at the commencement of the Afghan War which threatened to become one of great gravity. The Territorials, who had gone to take over the garrison duties in India on the outbreak of the Great War, had been given to understand that they would be brought back to England or sent to one of the fighting fronts nearer home, within a year. Instead, they had been kept in India, away from friends and families, for four weary years. Arrangements had been made directly after the Armistice, to send them home as soon as possible.

The majority had already started, some had reached Bombay, and a large number had got as far as Deolali, when the order came for them to retrace their steps and to proceed to the Frontier.

Until the Afghan imbroglio was terminated it was manifestly impossible to denude India of British troops. The order created a feeling of discontent amongst the Territorials which held the menace of a mutiny. There was talk of downing arms and refusal to obey the order on one side, of courts-martial and dire punishments on the other. A deputation of non-commissioned officers proceeded to Army Headquarters to lay their grievances before the Commander-in-Chief. Sir Charles addressed them with such a mixture of firmness, tact and understanding that they who had arrived cursing, departed blessing, and nothing further was heard about the refusal to obey orders.

The conclusion to the despatch of the Commander-in-Chief on the Afghan War contains the following words of commendation: "It now only remains for me to express my appreciation of the manner in which commanders, staffs, troops and administrative services faced and overcame the difficulties of this campaign. . . .

"I have already referred to the fine military spirit in which the troops accepted the burden of this campaign; this spirit was fully maintained in the field, and all ranks, British and Indian, showed themselves to be animated by that determination to close with the enemy which is the surest guarantee of success. No greater testimony of this spirit could be adduced than the cheerfulness with which all ranks endured the trying climatic conditions prevailing and the discomforts inevitable in the opening stages of the campaign. The lot of the troops and administrative personnel detailed to posts on the lines of communication was a particularly hard one, for communications with the frontier pass through a belt of country possessing a climate of exceptional severity and scanty facilities for providing comfort and recreation. Nevertheless, this spirit of cheerfulness was nowhere more in evidence than among these posts."

He referred to the generous spirit of co-operation shown by the ruling chiefs in offering their troops and their personal services, notwithstanding that their contingents to the Great War had only recently returned from overseas. Every Durbar possessing Indian State troops placed them at the disposal of the Government of India.

He made acknowledgment of the advice and assistance he had received from Sir Hamilton Grant and Mr. Denys Bray,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Now Sir Denys Bray, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., C.B.E.

who successively held the appointments of Foreign Secretary in the Government of India, and of Mr. H. R. C. Dobbs,<sup>1</sup> the Governor General's Agent in Paluchistan. We have already seen, on the evidence of Sir Hamilton Grant, that the coming of Sir Charles was the commencement of a better understanding and closer co-operation between civil and military. He got the best out of all those with whom work brought him in contact, whether soldier or civilian, and in giving their best, all else was set aside.

Writing privately of his own assistants he said that the mobilization and organization of the field army reflected the highest credit on the Headquarters staff and that they showed a high degree of individual and collective merit. He was proud to have been associated with them during the late crisis. But all his co-workers will agree that the master-mind and organiser of the victory was Sir Charles Monro.

For his work in connection with the Afghan War Sir Charles received the Grand Cross of the Order of the Star of India.

The termination of the Afghan War was followed by a period of great anxiety on the Frontier. The Waziris were on the war-path. Raids were of weekly occurrence along the whole borderland from Peshawar to Dera Ismail Khan. Certain districts had become almost untenable. Afghanistan remained sulky and received a Soviet envoy. A great number of the British troops (Territorials) who had been garrisoning India during the War and had been retained for the operations against the Afghans had sailed for home. The Indian Army was suffering from the strain of the Great War through loss of experienced officers and non-commissioned officers and from insufficient training, especially in frontier warfare. It was forty per cent. below its pre-War standard of efficiency.

The circumstances were so unfavourable that there were many who advocated a withdrawal of our military and administrative control from the foothills of the Frontier mountains and the virtual abandonment of an extensive tract to Afghan influence. The adoption of this policy would have shaken our whole position on the Frontier and the effect would have extended to the Punjab and would have added immensely to the internal difficulties with which the Government of India was faced.

Sir Henry Dobbs, who had succeeded Sir Hamilton Grant in the appointment of Foreign Secretary, writes: "Sir Charles, as Commander-in-Chief, had really the casting vote on all these questions, for military considerations were paramount. I was deeply impressed by the impregnable calm and common sense

<sup>1</sup> Now Sir Henry Dobbs, G.B.E., K.C.S.I., K.C.M.G., K.C.I.E.



MEMBERS OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, GIBRALTAR, AT PRESENTATION OF FAREWELL ADDRESS  
TO SIR CHARLES AND LADY MONRO





which he showed at this crisis. He held that the restoration of our reputation all along the Frontier was essential and for this reason he pressed for the permanent occupation of the Khyber Pass, the building of the Khyber railway and the planting of a permanent cantonment in Central Waziristan, which had for generations been our Achilles heel on the border.

"I was in the fullest sympathy with these ideas and I had many conferences with him before we took our proposals to the Viceroy's Council. What chiefly struck me was his bull dog-like grip of the main points and his complete disregard of what may be called the baser political considerations. He never dreamt of taking the rosy path and yielding to financial pressure or to the war-weariness of his own forces. He withstood the tide of defeatism like a rock, and he had his reward when the Government of India, and almost incredibly, the Secretary of State, Mr. Edwin Montagu, breaking with the traditions of fifty years, accepted the new policy of holding the centre of Waziristan. That policy, translated into the occupation of Razmak and the covering of Waziristan with mechanical transport roads, has been a triumphant success and has resulted in such tranquillity as the Frontier has never before known. It has completely restored our prestige in Afghanistan and has transformed the Frontier from being our main embarrassment into a strong shield for India against both Afghan intrigues and Bolshevik propaganda.

"Had there been at that time in India a more 'political' Commander-in-Chief with one eye on the Legislative Assembly and the other on the Finance Department, these magnificent gains could never have been secured and the Indian frontier would still have been a prey to violence, while the absurd 'burn and scuttle' policy of former days would have continued to bring our name into contempt. India and the Frontier owe Sir Charles a heavy debt of gratitude."

The late General Lord Rawlinson has generally received the credit for being the originator of that "new frontier policy."<sup>1</sup> This is a mistake. It was conceived by General Monro and adopted in principle by the Government of India, some months before General Rawlinson arrived in the country.

In a speech dealing with future policy regarding Waziristan, the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, said, "... We have had a campaign, more or less important, against Waziristan on an average every four years—sometimes it has been called an expedition and sometimes a blockade. Since 1852 we have had seventeen of these military operations and since 1911 we have had four. . . .

<sup>1</sup> See article in *The Times* of April 16th, 1930, on Air Policy in India,

"During the last few years, when we were occupied first with the Great War and then with the Afghan War, their depredations have been bolder and more intolerable than ever before. . . . During the Afghan War they swept over the border tracts of the Derajat and Zhob and even penetrated into the Punjab, robbing and murdering the peaceful villagers, especially the Hindus; and after the signature of peace with Afghanistan, they became even more truculent and absolutely refused the lenient terms which we offered them in the hope of avoiding a campaign.

"On a review of the facts we have now made up our minds that this continual and gratuitous provocation can no longer be suffered, and we have decided, with the approval of His Majesty's Government, that our forces shall remain in occupation of Central Waziristan, that mechanical roads shall be constructed throughout the country and that our present line of posts shall be extended as may seem necessary. It is not possible to set any limits to the period of our occupation, our main care being that we shall not lose the advantage gained during the last nine months at the cost of valuable lives and of much money and that there shall be no recurrence of the series of outrages of which I have given you an outline.

"We hope that the peace which must eventually attend our domination of these tribesmen will bring its usual blessings in its train; that they may be weaned from their life of rapine and violence and may find, both in material improvements in their country, such as the extension of irrigation and cultivation, and in civilizing intercourse with India, a more stable prosperity than they have ever derived from their traditional profession of robbers and marauders."

This speech was delivered on August 20th, 1920, that is, over two months before General Monro handed over the chief command to his successor. But it was much earlier than this that the idea began to take shape in Sir Charles' mind. By his direction a case was prepared in the autumn of 1919 for presentation to the Defence Committee and accompanied by a large-scale map on which was shown the line of the proposed circular road in approximately its present alignment. At the same time a note drawn up by the General Staff<sup>1</sup> was addressed to the Government of India in which it was explained that the policy meant nothing less than the permanent occupation of Waziristan.

<sup>1</sup> General Sir G. Kirkpatrick had vacated the appointment of Chief of General Staff, India, and was succeeded in March, 1919, by Lieutenant General Sir Claude Jacob, now Field Marshal Sir Claude Jacob, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., K.C.M.G.

In a letter to the C.I.G.S. dated June, 1920, Sir Charles says : " The Government of India have decided to make roads throughout their country at leisure and the Mahsud will have to face the consequences. In my view, we must stand no further nonsense from these tribesmen and if they give us any trouble then we must march in, build roads and permanently occupy their country."

Another reform of great importance, the seed of which was sown by General Monro, while the fruit fell into the hands of his successor, was the reorganization of the Indian infantry into regimental groups. Each group consists of three to five battalions and one training battalion. In addition to training the recruits the training battalion acts as a permanent *dépôt* for the active battalions of its group, both in peace and war. It is an immense improvement on the old system.

Sir Charles found one golden compensation for laborious days passed in office, council, tours and inspections. It was the magic of the devoted love which lay within the circle of his own home. There moved Lady Monro, and in her company he found all the relief and relaxation from the cares of his position which he desired. On someone remarking that he must feel tired and anxious he replied : " Yes, I do feel a bit worried sometimes and I just take a look at Mary and I'm all right again."

But there were others to be thought of and hospitality to be dispensed. He probably never had an inkling that it was he himself who was the source of all the cheeriness and contentment of the Snowden home. The personal staff were an extraordinarily happy party. Throughout the many long weary months when he was organizing the Mesopotamian set-backs, and later the Afghan War and Frontier risings, his irresponsible humour and *joie de vivre* lightened up every room in Snowden and penetrated every office in Army Headquarters. Everyone to Sir Charles was " young." It was a reflection of his own mind. It was his term of endearment to one and all irrespective of rank or age. It was " young Altham," or " young Scott," or " young Bingley," as much as " young Bridges or " young Macartney." Many had nicknames. Major " Smiler " Muir, the Comptroller, was called " Nero " on account of protesting that the sum Sir Charles proposed placing to Lady Monro's private account was unduly large and would make a considerable hole in his salary. Lady Monro herself did not escape her share of chaff and jocular reprisals. He was ever considerate of her and probably the greatest pleasure he had whilst in India was to be witness

of the esteem and affection in which she was held by all classes of Simla society.

His love of children was very great. He seemed to know all the children in Simla by name. The road from Snowden to Army Headquarters passes through the Lakhar Bazaar and along The Ridge past the church. At these points the children used to assemble daily in order to intercept him on his way to office and listen to the laughter and the tale which held them from their play.

On one occasion a child, who was accompanied by its mother, called him "Old Buster." He asked the child where it had got that name from, and the reply was "That's what Daddy always calls you!" The poor mother! But Sir Charles had a special gift for turning a blind eye or a deaf ear to what was better left unnoticed. He enjoyed telling the story afterwards.

The aide-de-camp on duty had a difficult time during these morning walks to Army Headquarters. He was expected to know the name of every British man, woman or child who was met on the road, and the owner of every horse which passed.

Owing to his accident in Gallipoli, Sir Charles was unable to take much walking exercise. He loved horses and riding and while in India always kept a stable of three or four first-rate hacks and hunters. During the winter of 1918-19 he started a long dog pack in Delhi for the benefit of officers at Army Headquarters, which is still maintained. It showed fair sport and no one rode harder or straighter than the Commander-in-Chief.

It is necessary once more to return to the Frontier. When the Afghans invaded India, Waziristan rushed gladly into the fray. When Afghanistan was put out of action, the Waziris and Mahsuds continued the quarrel on their own account. They attacked our posts and raided our territory, murdering, pillaging and kidnapping as they went, with such persistence and frequency as to render active operations on our part imperative. These operations commenced on November 3rd and finished on May 7th, 1919, when the tribesmen accepted terms imposed by the Government of India.

There are certain observations contained in Sir Charles Monro's report on the Waziristan operations which merit particular notice. They throw a light on the unavoidable inefficiency of the Indian army for engaging in a frontier campaign at this time. They evoke our admiration for the manner in which the Indian ranks, overcoming their deficiencies, vanquished the

most formidable tribe on the Frontier and the not less formidable obstacles of terrain and climate which encountered them.

Above all, deserving of recognition are the officers who trained and led these men, with confidence, to success. Sir Charles Monro said: "It is necessary here to lay emphasis upon the supreme importance of adequate training of troops prior to their employment on a frontier campaign. Nothing can take the place of careful individual training. If possible, it is more essential in mountain warfare than in any other class of fighting that troops should have confidence in their weapons. This can only be obtained by systematic individual training, which must include instruction in making the best tactical use of the ground, in the principles of fire and movement, and in the mental development of the soldier to such a degree of alertness that no target escapes detection and appropriate action is taken immediately.

"At the beginning of these operations a proportion of the troops were not fully masters of their weapons. This was due to their ignorance of how to use them to the best advantage, as, owing to the demands made by 'the Great War,' men had been somewhat hastily trained and it is probable that the severity of the fighting in December was due, to a certain degree, to this lack of training.<sup>1</sup> However, as the campaign proceeded, the lessons learned in the field, gradually transformed the troops into a highly efficient force, confident in themselves, in their weapons and in their leaders.

"The close of these operations on May 7th brought to an end a Frontier campaign of unparalleled hard fighting and severity. The enemy fought with a determination and courage which has rarely, if ever, been met with by our troops in similar operations. The character of the terrain combined with trying and arduous climatic conditions, alone presented difficulties before which the most hardened troops might well have hesitated. The resistance of the enemy has been broken and the difficulties successfully overcome by a force composed almost entirely of Indian troops. No British troops except for the Royal Air Force and a British battery of mountain artillery, were employed. This fact has without doubt considerably raised the prestige of the Indian

<sup>1</sup> In consequence of this lack of training in mountain warfare which was evident in the junior officers as much as it was in the rank and file, a school of mountain warfare was established at Abbottabad. There are many officers who would readily acknowledge the value of the instruction they received at this school from the capable and experienced Commandant, Lieutenant Colonel W. M. Villiers-Stuart, C.B.E., D.S.O.

army on the Frontier, and increased the *esprit de corps* of the troops engaged."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Because of the stain on the good name of a very fine regiment in consequence of certain happenings which occurred in Peshawar in the autumn of 1930, the opportunity is taken of quoting the following extract from the despatch : "Amongst the many battalions that have done well I wish particularly to bring to notice the 4/39 Garhwalis (now the 18th Royal Garhwal Rifles). This battalion fought with magnificent spirit, eagerly engaged the enemy in hand-to-hand fighting, and obtained a moral superiority over him that reacted at once throughout the force."

---

## CHAPTER XV

Permanent nature of Monro's innovations. The Monro canteens. The Auxiliary Force and the Territorial Force. Reorganization of Indian Cavalry. Tours. Correspondence. Resigns appointment. *The Times* criticisms. Monro appointed Colonel of The Queen's. Lord Chelmsford's eulogy. Monro is thanked by Secretary of State and by Army Council. Presentation to Lady Monro. Sir Charles and Lady Monro leave India. Their arrival in London.

MANY of the measures introduced by General Monro during the Great War have remained as permanent institutions of the Army in India, such as the grant of King's Commissions to Indians, the four commands, the enhanced status of the Adjutant General and Quartermaster General's branches with the consequent decentralization of work at Army Headquarters, the development of Frontier communications, free rations for Indian troops, dieted Indian station hospitals, nursing sisters for Indian hospitals.

In addition to these are the post-War measures, of which the most important are: the initiation of the new Frontier policy in connection with Waziristan, the formation of the Selection Board, improvements and increase in married quarters of British troops in the Hills, better lighting of barracks and British and Indian hospitals, improved scale of field service rations, improved rates of pay for British officers of the Indian Army, for medical services, for many command and staff appointments, for clerks. The standard of accommodation of Indian troop lines was put on a higher level and there were many other steps taken in various directions, having for their object the better comfort and welfare of all ranks of the Army in India.

The comfort and the contentment of the "other ranks" and their families were always the objects of Sir Charles' solicitation. He was never more "at home" than when he was talking to the private soldier. He had an almost unique comprehension of their ways of thinking and their outlook on life. When he talked to a soldier he would draw out confidences which would be rarely imparted by a private to an officer of comparatively junior rank and much less to a general and Commander-in-Chief.

Writing to his brother in 1918 he says, "I was visiting hospitals



a short time ago. I talked to a patient who told me he came from Winchester and when I asked him if he knew Uplands he replied, 'Yes, well. I often worked in the garden of Uplands for Major and Mrs. Monro!' His name was Grant. Such a nice fellow he was and we talked at length about Winchester. Soon after I had a few words with a Hythe man. He worked in a small saddle shop at the end of the street leading up to The Paddock. It is strange how small the world is that I should have met two men in one day with whom association was quite close."

The Monro canteens which are to be seen at all the larger railway stations and junctions of Northern India, and which were established on the initiative of Sir Charles, have proved a great boon to soldiers travelling on leave or for any other purpose away from their units, providing as they do, good and cheap food, cooked and served under sanitary conditions. They are among the most popular institutions introduced during the Great War.

Once, when the Commander-in-Chief was visiting Peshawar on tour, the writer, who was commanding the Peshawar district at the time, accompanied him when he inspected the Monro canteen at the railway station. The canteen was provided with fly-blinds and, as a rule, not a fly was to be seen inside the building. On this occasion the writer was horrified, on entering, to see a dozen or so flypapers laid out covered with flies, dead and dying. Sir Charles made the remarks that an inspecting officer would naturally make at the sight of these hundreds of flies where not a single fly ought to be. On subsequent enquiries being made it transpired that the manager of the canteen, an Indian, had spent a considerable portion of the morning, together with his assistants, in catching flies outside and putting them on the papers in order to show the Commander-in-Chief that the credit did not lie with the excellent flyproof building but with the manager himself for his zeal in exterminating the flies as fast as they effected an entry!

Ever since the Mutiny there had been a European Volunteer Force in India, which at the time of the outbreak of the Great War numbered several thousands. By the year 1916 it was proved that the terms of service were not sufficiently elastic to meet the conditions brought about by the War. Public opinion, too, was expressing itself strongly in favour of some form of compulsory service. Consequently Sir Charles Monro introduced the Indian Defence Force Act which became law in 1917. Under this Act, all British European subjects between the ages of 18 and 41 became liable for military service.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Indian Defence Force reached a strength of 42,000 men, of which 16,000 were volunteers for general service and 26,000 were for local service.



IN THE GARDEN AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE, GIBRALTAR  
SIR CHARLES MONRO      SIR ROGER KEYES      EARL BEATY



The I.D.F. remained in being until 1920 when it was replaced by the Auxiliary Force, India, which was virtually the same as the old Volunteer Force, but greatly superior to it in organization and training. Its membership is limited to Europeans. It comprises all branches of the service, cavalry, artillery, engineers, infantry, railway battalions, machine-gun and motor machine-gun companies. Some of the units are very efficient. Many prominent officials and leading business men give out of their few leisure hours to command or serve with the A.F.I. For instance, one of the Calcutta battalions was lately commanded in fact, and not merely in name, by the Chief Justice of the High Court of Bengal.<sup>1</sup>

The Auxiliary Force, India, is something more than an emergency weapon. It takes on itself the duties of internal defence in extensive tracts which are thinly garrisoned by regular troops, such as Assam, thereby relieving Government of the necessity of providing regular Internal Defence Units and a corresponding increase to the size of the Regular Army. Its present strength is 33,000.

Another important Act passed in 1920 was the Indian Territorial Force Act. Indian political leaders soon recognized the fact that self-government connotes the capacity for self-defence. The advent of the first phase of representative institutions gave rise to a demand for wider opportunities to be given to Indians to fit themselves for the defence of their own country. The Territorial Force offers the means for military training to the classes of the population among whom military service has not hitherto been an hereditary profession. It is composed of provincial battalions and University training corps battalions. While the results up to date have been fairly satisfactory in those provinces which do contain a population with martial instincts it cannot be said that the inhabitants of the non-martial provinces, such as Bengal, have, as yet, made much use of the opportunity offered to them. It numbers 22,000 men.

One important change introduced by General Monro was the organization of the Indian cavalry on a non-silladar or regular system in place of the silladar system, which had been in force since the days of Akbar up to the termination of the Great War. Briefly, under the silladar system a recruit, on joining, paid down a lump sum to cover the cost of his horse and equipment, which sum was returned to him on the termination of his service. After joining, he received from Government his pay and nothing else. The regiment did the rest, providing horses, equipment, regimental transport, saddlery, forage, accommodation, in fact

<sup>1</sup> The Honourable Mr. (Sir George) Justice Rankin.

everything but rifles, machine-guns, the quarter guard and the regimental hospital. Some regiments bred their own horses and nearly all had their own grass farms. The various requirements were paid for out of separate funds to which the men paid monthly subscriptions. The regiment was a large business concern, and as with business concerns, it was the object of the commanding officer to produce the best results from a well-balanced combination of efficiency with economy.

The record of the Silladar Cavalry in many a field, in India, in Egypt, in China, in Afghanistan, in Persia and on the Frontier, was a fine one. In the Great War it served in the trenches in France, it took a conspicuous part in the final operations in Mesopotamia and in General Allenby's great campaign, which ended in the total defeat of the Turks and the occupation of Damascus and Aleppo.

The system was an economical one ; the twenty regiments of Indian Cavalry that are now organized on a regular basis cost as much to maintain as the thirty-nine silladar cavalry regiments used to cost. Nevertheless, the silladar system was considered to be an anachronism and that it was desirable to organize the cavalry in accordance with up-to-date ideas and bring it into line in this respect with other arms of the service. It is doubtful whether in any case it could have been maintained much longer as it was becoming increasingly difficult to get men of the right class, the Indian counterpart of our yeomen.

Notwithstanding the many questions, great and small, which came up daily for the opinion and decision of the Commander-in-Chief, he made the time to carry out many tours of inspection. As already related, both Lord Chelmsford and General Monro held different opinions from those of their respective predecessors regarding the necessity for these tours, and were of one mind that the benefits accruing from them far outweighed any inconvenience which might be incurred by the temporary absence of the Commander-in-Chief from his Headquarters and from the Viceroy's Council. Most of these tours were long and some were arduous, taking Sir Charles to nearly every part of India where troops were stationed, to headquarters of districts and brigades, to visit the war hospitals and embarkation arrangements at Bombay, to Quetta, the Khyber and the whole length of the Frontier. He inspected everything of military importance and wherever he went he left behind him a feeling of confidence in the future and a brighter outlook on the present than had always been manifest before his visit.

The writing of official notes was a rather laborious process for

General Monro. But what he wrote was always very much to the point, forcible and often original in style. On one occasion a memorandum, which had been written by an officer possessing considerable acquaintance with the classics, was placed before him for his information and remarks. The composer had evidently considered that this was a good opportunity to share with others the benefits of his knowledge instead of keeping it selfishly to himself, for the memorandum was full of Latin quotations. Apparently Sir Charles was of the opinion that in other respects it contained little else of merit. At least this may be inferred from the only comment he made, which was, "This note is 'Nullum sanguineum bonum'," after writing which he looked slyly up at the staff officer who had brought the paper to him and said, "You see, I too know Latin!"

Previous to going to India, Sir Charles had never made use of a stenographer. While at Simla he was with difficulty persuaded to try and lighten his work by employing a shorthand writer. Some days later he expressed his satisfaction with this time-saving method of getting through his heavy official correspondence. It was discovered later that he wrote all he had to say first of all and afterwards dictated it to the shorthand writer! The new method proved longer than the old one!

In the Council of State and Legislative Assembly his speech was rather that of the tented field than of the council chamber. He was no dialectician, but he had a ready wit and there was no mistaking his meaning. In spite of his bluff and often uncomprising responses to the criticisms of military matters, he was liked, respected and trusted by the members of both Chambers, European and Indian, in a greater degree than others have been whose speech and manner have been more accommodating.

Those of his staff who lived in daily companionship with him know how Sir Charles overworked himself from the hour he landed in India and how, when worn and over-fatigued as he undoubtedly was by the end of 1919, he continued to work up to the last day as hard as he had done from the first. He was driven to work by the sense of duty which took precedence of every other consideration. He was aware of the existence within himself of this impelling power of duty, but would take no credit for it, attributing it to his early training in The Queen's. But training alone could never have fashioned so fine a product had not the quality of duty been a natural and dominant factor of his inbeing.

At last, when he felt that he could no longer give of his best, he decided to resign his post in favour of a successor. With a

self-abnegation rare in a man in his position he said, "It will be for the benefit of the Army that there should be a change. The past four years have not been marked out as a period of entire calm and any man is bound to suffer from the effects of continuous work for so long a time."

An article appeared in *The Times* on August 23rd, 1920, on the appointment of General Rawlinson to succeed General Monro as Commander-in-Chief in India, which contained the following remarks. . . .

"Sir Charles Monro went out to India at very short notice in 1916 and at a time when the Indian Army Administration had fallen into serious discredit. The shadow of the early mistakes in the Mesopotamian campaign hung over Army Headquarters at Simla, while there was much discontent among the British officers of the native army. Sir Charles was given a very free hand and it has never been clear that he made full use of his powers. Perhaps he was hampered in the later period of his term of office by the knowledge that a Commission, presided over by Lord Esher, had been charged with the task of framing fresh military reforms.

"Be that as it may, Sir Charles Monro has shown little disposition to modify the excessive centralization which he found on his arrival, but he is an experienced soldier of sterling worth, and his presence in India at a very troubled period has been of great value. It has rightly been felt that he is a commander who can always be relied on in an emergency, and if he has been inclined to mark time in matters of reform, the probability is that he could have done very little else. He has been short of men and often short of munitions to an extent unknown to any other Commander-in-Chief in India. He has never set eyes on large portions of his troops who are stationed all over the Near and Middle East under the command of others. He had to face much severe criticism during the Afghan War last year, because it was thought that insufficient progress was made, and still more because at first the transport and the medical arrangements were far below the requisite standard, but in the light of fuller knowledge it has been realized that the defects were primarily due to the drain of India's military resources in the Great War."

A second article, less critical, indeed somewhat apologetic in tone, appeared in *The Times* of September 6th, 1920. It said:

"General Sir Charles Monro has arrived in this country on relinquishing the command in India. Though we have sometimes had occasion to criticize his conduct of Indian military affairs, especially in regard to the Frontier operations last year, his own

subsequent explanations, which were too long withheld, have placed his record in a much more favourable light. It must be admitted that he had a great deal to contend against for which in fairness he must not be held to blame.

"To soldiers the command in India usually comes almost at the close of a brilliant career and it is the finest appointment open to the Army. It is, however, no secret that Sir Charles Monro was not eager to return to India in any capacity. He was asked to go at a time when, after distinguished service in the Western theatre as a divisional and army commander, he had just carried to a successful conclusion the evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula—a military operation of a most delicate and difficult character, which the very senior commander whom he replaced had declared to be 'unthinkable.' It was not by his own desire, but in pursuance of a soldiery instinct of obedience, that he gave up his command in France and went to India, where the conduct of military operations from Simla had aroused grave misgivings and much disapproval.

"At the time he arrived in India it was of the first importance that the military effort of that country should be increased, and that she should throw all her resources into the struggle. The two great Boards which contributed so much to the fulfilment of India's endeavour received from the start his unwavering support and encouragement. The Munitions Board, from which such great things resulted, was established on his own initiative.

"While his energies were fully concentrated on the war effort assisted by a somewhat makeshift headquarters staff, since in India, as in England, many of the best men had betaken themselves to the theatres of war, Sir Charles had to tackle schemes of reconstruction. When the European war had ended, and when it seemed as though demobilisation was in sight, the Afghan war broke out and operations had to be undertaken in difficult country, with war-weary and inexperienced troops. During his last year in India Sir Charles Monro has been labouring afresh at reconstruction, although large Indian forces are still overseas.

"We said on a previous occasion that Sir Charles Monro was given a free hand in India, and that it has not been clear that he made full use of his powers. On the other hand, we have recognized that it was difficult for him to institute drastic reforms, however urgently they might be needed when the Esher Commission had been charged with the work of inquiry into Indian Army questions. It can at least be said of the retiring Commander-in-Chief that during his term of office the Indian Army has met every demand that has been made upon it, that it has been ex-



panded to a degree never dreamt of by any of his predecessors, and that the spirit has never failed. Some at least of the credit for this must be accorded to a Chief of great experience and sound judgment, who was always active, who never spared himself, who was never downcast in dark moments and who never allowed himself to be overwhelmed by the magnitude of his task."

These articles are not too generous. The criticisms they contain are :

(a) That General Monro failed to take advantage of the free hand given him by Government in order to introduce drastic reforms in the Army in India.

(b) That he continued the evil system of over centralization in Army Headquarters which existed at the time of his arrival in India.

There is no warrant for saying that Sir Charles "was given a very free hand." He went to India with his hands no less tied than were those of his predecessors (excepting Lord Kitchener). In fact, through force of circumstances his hands were doubly tied. There were the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms looming on the civil side, and despite the immunity of the Army Vote from the direct attentions of Indian legislators, these reforms alone served to take the wind out of the sails of everyone save Mr. Montagu himself and the Indian Nationalists.

On his arrival, Sir Charles found the Mesopotamian report, fresh from the printers, calling to the Secretary of State for an investigation into military administration. The response to this call did not bestow on the new Commander-in-Chief any mandate to alter anything outside the scope of statutory power. It was answered, after much delay, by the appointment of Lord Esher's Committee. The delay was due to the obvious difficulty there was in getting together the requisite machinery during the course of the world war. The Esher Committee, when it was at last formed, was slow in coming to its conclusions.

Lord Esher and his colleagues commenced their investigations in London, whence they issued the first part of their report, which was mainly abortive in practical results. The Committee then journeyed to India, without their chairman, in order to get some local colour, and afterwards returned to England in order to complete their labours.

The shadow of the Esher Committee had been hanging over Simla and Delhi from the day Sir Charles set foot in the country. Until that shadow took shape and substance, what could the Commander-in-Chief do? Any reforms instituted by him might well clash with the recommendations of the Committee and the

work already done have to be undone at great expense and wasted labour. Moreover, what would any Commander-in-Chief be allowed to do in face of the appointment of this Committee. Sir Charles' hands were tied and his mouth was closed by the mere fact of the appointment of the Committee.

When Sir Charles Monro arrived in India he found himself with an army composed in its British element of a force in which every man and almost every officer was destined to leave India directly hostilities ceased. These were the Territorials who had been sent to take the places of the British battalions which India had sent to France. The War was in full swing and there was no end in sight. Munition factories had to be improvised from next to nothing; supplies, material and men were short; hospitals were full, and the sick and wounded from overseas came in unending numbers. The Headquarters was worn and tired; half of its number were untrained in staff work.

No sooner had the Great War ended and demobilisation commenced than trouble began on the Frontier. This was not the ordinary trouble of a tribal rising, but that which was engendered by Russian intrigue, at German instigation, and culminated in the Afghan War and the Waziristan campaign. Internal rebellion broke out in the Punjab and other places. The Territorial troops had been sent to India with an understanding that they would be brought back to Europe in order to participate in the War. Instead, they had been kept in India for the whole period of the War and when at last they were on their way to the port of embarkation, they were suddenly stopped and brought back in order to assist in repelling the Afghan invasion. It is not surprising that a great deal of discontent and resentment manifested itself among their ranks.

It was due to Sir Charles Monro's tact in dealing with the soldier and his personality that something very like a mutiny was averted. This circumstance added to the difficulties of the situation. No one knew, and no one could guess, what was in front of India in regard to its ultimate military needs, when peace should reign again. To talk of the possibility of administrative reform in such conditions shows lack of acquaintance with India's constitution and the limited statutory powers of the Commander-in-Chief, as well as a want of appreciation of the realities of the situation.

The statement that Sir Charles "has shown little disposition to modify the excessive centralization which he found on his arrival" is contrary to facts. The increased authority of the Adjutant General's and Quartermaster General's Departments and the re-creation of the Four Commands are refutations of this

assertion. The Headquarters Staff heard the word "decentralization" throughout Sir Charles' régime until they were tired of it. "Decentralization" is a more complicated matter than it appears to be, since it hinges on the delegation of financial power to subordinate formations, a step which has always been strenuously opposed by the Finance Department. It required more than a single Commander-in-Chief's period of command to remove this stumbling-block.

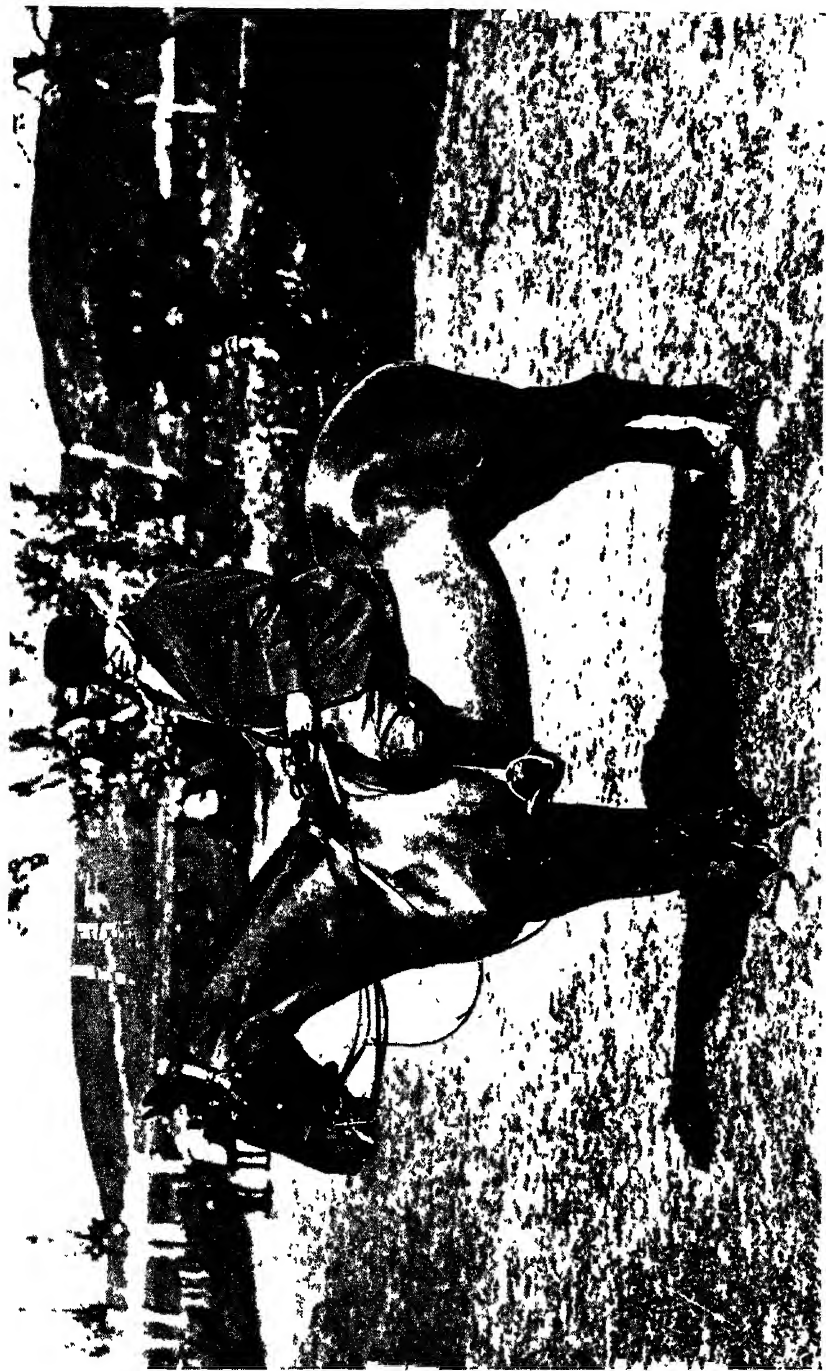
An officer who spent many years at Army Headquarters and who had an almost unique experience of the work of the Headquarters offices said to the writer: "I have worked in personal touch with Lord Kitchener, with Sir Beauchamp Duff, with Sir Charles Monro, with Lord Rawlinson and with Sir William Birdwood; as far as it is possible for me to say, no one of these gave such close attention to the possibilities of decentralization as Sir Charles Monro."

Apart from those two new developments of the Great War, the Air Force and Mechanized Transport, which mainly owing to Sir Charles Monro's insistence were expanded in India to the utmost extent which financial considerations and the Home Government's capacity for supplying pilots and machines permitted, the two most far-reaching military reforms introduced since the year 1918 are the new Frontier policy and the introduction of the regimental system in the Indian Army.

It has been shown that the new Frontier policy was initiated by Sir Charles. The reorganization of the cavalry and infantry would also have been effected in his day had the conditions been sufficiently favourable or had he served his full time of office.

In September, 1920, we find him writing: "We are anxious to reduce the Army to pre-War standards, but so long as we have such commitments in Palestine and Mesopotamia, we are powerless. We have many changes in hand which we cannot introduce so long as this element of uncertainty obtains. We want to institute a scheme of training regiments, whereby the present system of cavalry and infantry single dépôts will be abolished and in substitution a series of grouped training regiments of cavalry and infantry will be formed, where all recruit training will be done, reservists assembled, clothed and trained in case of mobilization. The scheme is now hanging fire and will continue to do so until the course towards a permanent settlement is clearer."

But Sir Charles Monro's work in India needs no vindication. We have seen the facts; they speak for themselves and are unanswerable. From the day of his arrival in India until the



WITH THE CALPÉ HOUNDS, GIBRALTAR



Armistice, he had one only thought and aim, namely, the development of India's resources in men and material and the adaptation of these to the Empire's fight for victory. After the Armistice came demobilization; the Afghan War; the Frontier troubles. The only period of peace during the whole of General Monro's time in India lay between May, 1920, and November, 1920, when he handed over the command to Lord Rawlinson. Field Marshal Sir William Robertson once remarked to the writer, "No Commander-in-Chief in India, not even Bobs, did as much as Monro."

On October 18th, 1918, Sir Charles was appointed Colonel of The Queen's Royal Regiment. Writing to Lord Chelmsford on the following day he says, "My wife and I are very grateful to you for your kind consideration in sending us photographs of Her Excellency and yourself. They will always remain a solid testimony to the great and unfailing kindness which we have received on so many occasions at Viceregal Lodge.

"It was very gratifying to me to read the generous references which you make in your letter to my work in India. I wish on leaving it could have been more ample and more competent.

"My spirits are at high pressure to-day. I heard yesterday that I had been appointed Colonel of my old regiment. Nothing personal could touch my heart so closely as such an honour."

At the last meeting of the Imperial Legislative Council at Simla in 1920, the Viceroy, in concluding the session, said:

"Since we met together on August 20th the news has come that His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief is about to relinquish his post. I am sure Hon'ble Members will wish me to offer to him a respectful and affectionate farewell.

"When Sir Charles Monro arrived in this country we were in the throes of the Great War and it was of paramount importance that India should put forward her best effort and throw all her available forces into the struggle. We all know what India did, and while we are not forgetful of the services of others, we cannot forget the pre-eminent services of the Commander-in-Chief. Always cheerful, never cast down, nor overwhelmed by the magnitude of his task, he heartened everybody to the great endeavour.

"The two great Boards which contributed so much to the accomplishment of India's contribution always had from him unwavering support and encouragement; indeed the Munitions Board was established on his initiative. He indeed has had a hard row to hoe. While his energies were being concentrated on the war effort, he had to face schemes of reconstruction, and

when it looked as if we could settle down to demobilization and reconstruction he was faced with the Afghan operations, with an army weary of war and depleted of experienced officers and trained men by reason of the great expansion which had taken place. And now for the past year he has been labouring at reconstruction, handicapped by the fact that large forces from India were overseas and were unable to get back. When I survey all this, and I know it from inside, I can only wonder at what he has been able to accomplish.

"But there is the personal side of his departure. We shall miss his contributions to our debates. The soldierly directness of his utterances, the unexpectedness of his replies have always added a flavour to our discussion, which we shall miss. But above all we shall miss that genial personality which has always been such a delight to us. I offer him and Lady Monro on behalf of us all our sincere regret at their departure and our good wishes for their future."

*The Times*, in reporting the speech, remarked: "These passages were loudly cheered as Sir Charles Monro enjoys remarkable popularity with all sections of the Council."

There were other appreciations of Sir Charles' services in India. The Secretary of State sent the following telegram:

"Secretary of State to Viceroy, dated 21st October, 1920.

"Private. Kindly give the following message to His Excellency the C-in-C.

"At close of Your Excellency's tenure of Commander-in-Chief in India, I desire to express to you personally my high appreciation of your services in connection with Army in India. During your command the Indian Army has been engaged in many theatres of war, maintaining always its great traditions, and your efforts to make it equal both in numbers and efficiency to constantly increasing demands that were made upon it have been crowned with unparalleled success. Again, many questions vitally affecting its well-being and contentment have come up for consideration and you have effectively watched over its interests. Lastly, in times of great tension and stress, your personality has won for military administration the confidence of Europeans and Indians alike. For services thus rendered to India and her Army I ask you to accept India's cordial thanks."

The Army Council conveyed their thanks in these words: "As Your Excellency is about to vacate the high office of Commander-in-Chief in India, which you have filled with such success and distinction during the most momentous period of the Empire's history, the Army Council desire to give expression

to the high sense which they entertain of your unfailing sympathy and ever-ready co-operation. India played a prominent part in bringing the War to a victorious conclusion and has been no less conspicuous in her contributions to the solution of the complex problems which are the legacy of the great conflict. Many demands have had to be made on the military resources of India for assistance, but the Army Council are anxious to testify to the prompt and practical response which all these appeals evoked from you and your staffs. They beg Your Excellency to accept their cordial thanks."

Sir Charles' immense popularity amongst all classes and communities was shared by Lady Monro, for her own sake and not simply as a reflection of her husband's qualities. A few days before the final departure from Simla, Lady Monro was entertained by the ladies of Simla, when Lady Jacob, in presenting to her a gift of carpets on their behalf, voiced the general feeling in a delightful little speech in which the following remarks occur :

"The work you have done, Lady Monro, both here and in Delhi, for those connected with the Army, your manifold yet unobtrusive activities for the good of others, and your unswerving desire to add to the happiness of those around you, will ever be remembered with gratitude by us all. We can testify in all sincerity to the kindly tact you have displayed in smoothing over differences, in preventing differences from arising, and in promoting a spirit of co-operation and good will. No one who has enjoyed the hospitality of Snowden or of Flagstaff House during the past four years can ever forget the friendly atmosphere which prevailed there and made the guests, whatever their rank or station in life, feel that the welcome given them was no mere matter of ceremony but came from the hearts of their generous hosts. You have shown that it is possible to diffuse an atmosphere of genuine human friendliness without any sacrifice of the true dignity of a great lady. . . ."

Sir Charles and Lady Monro left Simla for the last time on November 12th, 1920. Their kindness, sympathy with all classes, and above all, their dignified simplicity, had won the hearts of Europeans and Indians alike. A great crowd of soldiers, civilians, clerical staff, with their wives and families, and Indians, assembled to bid them farewell. It was a remarkable demonstration of the esteem and regard which was felt for both, such as had never before been accorded to any departing Commander-in-Chief. No other occupant of Snowden since the days of Lord Roberts had held the same place in the affections of the Simla community.



Sir Charles and Lady Monro sailed from Bombay on the *Kaiser-i-Hind* on November 20th, 1920, and Lord Rawlinson assumed the Chief Command in India on November 21st, 1920, the outgoing and ingoing Commander-in-Chiefs having passed each other at sea.

Sir Charles and Lady Monro reached London, on their return from India, on the evening of December 5th, 1920. There was no one, from either the India Office or the War Office, to greet the late Commander-in-Chief in India on his arrival. This apparently singular lack of courtesy excited some comment at the time. The fact that the omission was not intentional does not exonerate the India Office, which is primarily to be blamed for an error which should not have occurred. The War Office was dependent on the India Office for its information of the date and hour of Sir Charles' arrival, as is explained in the letter written by Sir Henry Wilson on the following day, in which the Field Marshal says :

"I have only this moment heard that you arrived home last night. On Saturday, before I left the office, I arranged with the India Office, who were to let me know when you were going to arrive, so that I might meet you as a small mark of friendship and respect. I heard nothing from the I.O. either on Saturday or yesterday, and this morning I saw a leader in *The Times* saying you *had* returned. . . . I write at once to explain matters because I would hate to feel that you thought I had been remiss or discourteous. . . ."

---

## CHAPTER XVI

Monro appointed Governor of Gibraltar. His interest and improvements. The Calpé Hunt. Visit of Duke and Duchess of York. An accident. Tributes of affection from the inhabitants of Gibraltar. Appeal to Secretary of State for extension of Monro's tenure of appointment. Military service terminates with departure from Gibraltar. Monro's valuation of his services. Useful life in England. Visit of Crown Prince of Japan.

**A**FTER their return from India the Monros lived in London. Sir Charles' time was much occupied in unveiling war memorials and attending meetings of the various societies in which he was interested. He was also called on to attend Court functions and perform a number of duties in his appointment of Aide-de-Camp General to the King. His greatest pleasure was a visit to Auchinbowie, near Stirling, the seat of his elder brother, Major George Monro, and Mrs. Monro—the Tempé of the correspondence. Here he cut the thistles, a recreation to which his thoughts had constantly turned during the War and when in India; and in the lovely gardens found that “greatest refreshment to the spirits of man.”

In September, 1923, came the offer of the Governorship of Gibraltar, and in September of that year Sir Charles sailed to take up his new appointment, leaving Lady Monro to follow later, when the climate of Gibraltar would be cooler.

Sir Charles Monro was exceedingly happy in his appointment as Governor of Gibraltar. He had happy memories of the place; the leisure of retirement did not allure him. But he did not leave England with unmixed feelings as may be gathered from a letter written by him on the outward voyage in which he says:

“Here we are, sailing leisurely along the coast of Spain; hot sun, sparkling air, but give me London and its fogs! The society of one's relations in a bad climate is infinitely preferable to scenery in the company of strangers. It is very nasty leaving one's own and the older I get, the more I hate it. About twenty-five years ago to a day, I went to Gibraltar and practically on the anniversary of leaving England this time, I went to India seven years ago, but every separation is worse than the last one. . . . Get hold of the September *Empire Review*; it is really well worth reading—an admirable article amongst others by

Lord Ronaldshay on the Ethics of Buddhism, most extraordinarily interesting."

Sir Charles took more than a perfunctory interest in everything connected with Gibraltar. He studied the inhabitants, their habits, idiosyncrasies and outlook; he searched deeply into the Rock's history. He went through all the old files and papers in the office at Government House and had those of any significance collected and classified. He discovered some prints of historical value, especially an old pair depicting the arming and provisioning at Gibraltar of Lord de Saumarez' ships prior to his actions in the Straits. They were badly damaged; Sir Charles had them perfectly restored and hung in the upper gallery round the patio, where also he caused the pictures of former Governors to be arranged in a more effective manner.

He collected the many curious old keys of various gates and posterns, which, duly labelled, were exhibited in a case hung in the dining-room. In this room there is a fine Reynolds painting of Lord Heathcote and pictures of officers who were present at the siege. The sun shines through the great windows from which one looks down on pomegranate, bougainvillea, mimosa and orange blossom. The beautiful flower and rock gardens were a delight to both Sir Charles and Lady Monro.

Sir Charles kept up an old Gibraltarian Christmas ceremony which is similar to one which used to take place at the Spanish Court. On Christmas Day, after the church parade, the Governor and Lady Monro, the Admiral and his wife and the staffs, in uniform, proceeded to the Convent and attended at the dinners of the aged men and women who are cared for by the nuns. Lady Monro and the Admiral's wife served the portions of the old women, the plates being handed round by the staff officers wearing frilly white aprons elaborately trimmed with lace, which the Reverend Mother insisted on their using in order to protect their uniforms. Sir Charles and the Admiral, also girt with aprons, presided in the old men's hall. After the old people had done justice to an enormous meal, the women danced to the music of castanets and queer little drums and the ceremony terminated.

Sir Charles was always interested in architecture. The new market was planned during his governorship. He wished the style to be based on that of the massively built fine old barracks and stores which date from the eighteenth century, as being most appropriate to the Fortress.

The Trafalgar Cemetery, situated at the base of the Moorish walls outside Charles V gate, was in a neglected state. Sir Charles

had it replanted with flowers and the inscriptions on the tombstones renovated. They generally record young officers who died from wounds received in duels or from malignant fever.

One day the monkeys raided Sir Charles' dressing-room; they had previously raided the C.R.E.'s house and many others. It was therefore arranged that the monkeys should be fed regularly up the Rock, after which their depredations became less frequent. The appointment, "Officer in Charge of Rock Apes," still appears in the local directory.

Sir Charles hunted regularly with the Calpé hounds. He always encouraged his officers to hunt and decreed that all offices were to be shut at 10.30 a.m. on hunting mornings. During one hunt, a horse kicked out and caught the General on his bad leg. The kick did little harm, but the General addressed the rider in the vulgar vernacular of the Army, to the scandalized amusement of the ladies who were within the range of his penetrating voice.

A much appreciated entertainment at Government House was the annual dinner which Sir Charles gave to the Royal Calpé Hunt. He also entertained at lunch the farmers whose lands were hunted over, and instituted a farmers' race in the hunt point-to-point races.

Gibraltar was the last stage of the Empire tour of the Duke and Duchess of York. They arrived, in H.M.S. *Renown*, at nine on the morning of June 23rd, 1927, and their whole day was occupied in receiving official addresses, in inspections, and in visiting different parts of the Rock. In the afternoon the Governor and Lady Monro gave a garden party in their honour, which was attended by a representative gathering from Gibraltar and the neighbouring towns of Algeçiras and La Linea. The inhabitants of Gibraltar gave Their Royal Highnesses an enthusiastic welcome, for the Duke and Duchess completely captured the hearts of the people during a visit which was all too brief, as the *Renown* left the harbour for England at eleven the same night.

Where interests conflict and prerogatives clash it is difficult always to avoid minor injuries; but no toes were ever trodden on while Sir Charles commanded at Gibraltar. He did much to solder the traditional friendship of the Navy and Army, and the relations between the two services have never been more cordial than those which existed during the period of his Governorship. The genial current of his buoyant nature was irresistible; it swept away every possible cause of friction.

A naval officer<sup>1</sup> writes: "When Sir Charles returned [to

<sup>1</sup> Admiral Sir Hugh D. R. Watson, K.C.B., C.V.O., C.B.E.

England] from Gibraltar in 1928 he had acquired many friends in the Navy, over and above the many he had before. As President of The Trafalgar Day Dinner of the Royal Navy Club of 1765 and 1785, I proposed that General Monro be invited as the guest of the evening. The dinner was held on October 23rd, 1928, at the Hotel Victoria. There were 194 members of the Royal Navy Club present, a very large gathering, and many came on account of Sir Charles, having recently known him and Lady Monro at Gibraltar, where they had been so kind to the Navy. It was very pleasant to see, at the dinner, the obvious pleasure that Sir Charles' presence gave and the number of friends who came up to greet him."

Hunting one day with the Calpé hounds Sir Charles met with an accident. He was riding across a stony field, in which some men were loading stones on to a donkey. The donkey was so overloaded that it could not rise, when at the moment that Sir Charles was passing it made a great effort and got up right under his horse's nose. The panniers containing the stones fell clattering to the ground, and the horse shied badly to one side, throwing Sir Charles on his back. He mounted again and got back to his car and was driven home, where he was obliged to take to his bed, and there he remained, propped up with pillows, for over three weeks.

There were several visitors staying at Government House at the time, but of all the people—staff, visitors, servants—there were only two persons, Lady Monro and Major Bridges, the Staff Surgeon, who were aware of the grave conditions which supervened on Sir Charles' injuries.

Lady Monro went bravely about her duties of hostess with a tranquil exterior which belied the anxiety that was in her heart, and the hospitality of Government House continued unabated.

It was several months before Sir Charles had shaken off the effects of the accident.

At the time of Sir Charles Monro's arrival Gibraltar was suffering from economic depression, owing to several causes. Local trade was stagnant, and there was considerable unemployment, which was partly due to the reduction of the garrison and of the ships under the local naval command.

A large number of men and women employed in the docks have their homes at La Linea, a small town which lies within the Spanish frontier. These people used systematically to smuggle tea, sugar, tobacco and other commodities through the Customs, on their return every night to their homes; these articles being slightly cheaper in Gibraltar than on the Spanish side.



SIR CHARLES MONRO LEAVING BUCKINGHAM PALACE AFTER  
APPOINTMENT AS BATH KING-AT-ARMS



When Prima da Riviera was Dictator he put a stop to this smuggling, and the Gibraltar revenue incurred an annual loss of some £30,000 in consequence. The result was that throughout his period as Governor Sir Charles was constantly hampered in his administration by want of money. He introduced certain measures of alleviation, but the evils lay, for the most part, outside the powers of the Governor to remedy. At the same time, he was able to interest himself in improvements and in the embellishment of the city, and to launch a housing scheme having for its object the improvement of the living accommodation of the poorer classes.

Administrative preoccupations did not cause the Governor to be unmindful of the soldiers' welfare. Observing that the space available for recreation on land was limited he turned his eyes towards the sea, with the result that a soldiers' rowing club was founded, which proved an unqualified success and was greatly appreciated by the men.

As had happened in India, so it was at Gibraltar, all hearts were united in their strong affection for the Governor and Lady Monro.

The Gibraltar Chamber of Commerce took the unprecedented step of addressing a memorial to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, praying that Sir Charles' tenure of office might be extended for a further period "in the full confidence that they voiced the earnest wishes of the people of Gibraltar." The request was not granted.

On the eve of the Governor's departure the Board of Directors assembled at Government House, and presenting a piece of plate, consisting of a handsome silver tea service after the style of George III, and a massive silver salver engraved with the arms of Gibraltar, to Sir Charles the President said :

"Your period of Governorship will be a memorable one indeed, for your unfailing kindness, your invariable tact in dealing with the many delicate matters that ever arise during the term of a colonial Governorship, and the really deep personal interest which both you and Lady Monro have ever taken in all that concerns Gibraltar and its population without distinction of class or creed, apart from your own great personalities, have, it is no exaggeration to say, endeared you for all time to the people of Gibraltar, who will not, and can never forget you. Your name indeed, Sir, will be associated with Gibraltar for generations as that of one of its most distinguished and popular administrators, and more than that, of a real and genuine Empire maker who by word and deed has interpreted the true meaning of the word 'Empire.' . . ."



In thanking the members of the Chamber of Commerce for their magnificent gift, General Monro said that had he been a younger man it might have turned his head to receive such a present and to hear the eloquent and flattering speech of the President, but he was approaching seventy years of age, and the failing of youth in that respect became less with increasing years. After referring to the objects for which he had worked, he expressed his sorrow at leaving the Rock, and added that Gibraltar was an extraordinary place in the way in which, once one lived there, even for a short time, one found it difficult to leave. The Rock might be referred to as one of the female sex who charmed everyone who came near her with the wiles of a woman, and those wiles were very difficult to disentangle oneself from. . . ."

At the last meeting of the Executive Council attended by Sir Charles, the senior member addressed him in these words :

"I have been desired by my colleagues on this Council to express our sense of how deeply we have appreciated the distinguished services which Your Excellency has rendered to this city and garrison and of our great regret at your approaching departure on the expiration of your tenure of office as Governor and Commander-in-Chief. We have observed with much satisfaction the cordial terms in which the people of Gibraltar have been expressing their high appreciation of your services and we desire most heartily to associate ourselves with the general tribute which has been paid to the successful manner in which Your Excellency has discharged the duties of your high post.

"Many tributes have been paid in the past to your predecessors for qualities we always expect to find in our Governors, viz. ability, justice, tact and zeal, but there is one characteristic which in you has been perhaps more marked than in any previous Governor and for which I think Your Excellency will be long remembered, and that is your wide humanity which has enabled you to show your great quality of human understanding.

"You are leaving behind you, Sir, a very different and much more improved Gibraltar in every respect than Your Excellency found in 1923, but you are also leaving a community who will feel like spoiled children after so much kindness and hospitality as has been meted out to them by Your Excellency and The Honourable Lady Monro.

"We thank you most warmly for your personal courtesies to us all and sincerely hope that both Your Excellency and the Honourable Lady Monro may long be spared to enjoy a well-

earned rest together with good health, prosperity and every conceivable happiness."

General Monro's military service terminated with his departure from Gibraltar. His thoughts regarding one aspect of his past career can be read in the following letter written about this time to his old friend General Saward:

"As for myself, I was amazed, dumbfounded by your generous reference to my services . . . my opinion of myself is a very humble one. I have never asked for anything in my life, and had I consulted my personal predilections it would have been preferable to me to have kept well in the background. It was news to me that a high personage had regarded me as having been unfortunate, and it was indeed kind of you to have told me so, for after all, officers primarily serve their Sovereign and the highest recognition they can receive is to be aware of his approval.

"At any rate the curtain has fallen on my military career. I leave it with regret, but with the assurance held to a marked degree, that a real Guardian Angel has watched over the career of an inconspicuous officer, with loving care, and has thereby secured the advancement of this individual very far beyond his deserts."

On their return from Gibraltar the Monros again took up their residence in London. They spent part of the winter of 1928-29 at Alasio in Italy; and it had been their intention to go abroad the following winter, but before the time for their departure arrived Sir Charles Monro had journeyed to his long home.

During the intervals between periods of employment and in retirement Sir Charles Monro's time was fully engaged in doing service for others. He succeeded the late General Lord Horne as Governor and Commandant of the Church Lads' Brigade, and Lord Haig as a Trustee of the Imperial War Museum. He was Chairman of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families Association and of the Army Temperance Association.

He constantly spoke at meetings held in connection with these institutions. One of his addresses at a Church Lads' Brigade meeting is of special interest, on account of the recent decision of the present Government to withdraw its support of the Cadets Corps. He said that the Brigade set itself to instil into its members the primary virtues of the military profession—discipline, obedience, sacrifice and comradeship. He recalled how members of the Church Lads' Brigade had come forward on the outbreak of the Great War and pointed to their fine record. He observed that the men who led good honest lives

were able to face the enemy with trust and confidence, not in a militaristic spirit but from an undiluted sense of duty.<sup>1</sup>

When the Crown Prince of Japan (the present Emperor) came to England on a State visit in May, 1921, Sir Charles Monro, Aide-de-camp General to the King, was one of the suite, amongst others being Admiral Sir Stanley Colville, First and Principal Naval Aide-de-Camp, Mr. (now Sir Miles) Lampson, subsequently Minister to China, and Lieutenant Colonel Francis Piggott.<sup>2</sup>

General Monro accompanied the Crown Prince throughout his tour in England and Scotland. He was thrown into daily contact with the Prince during his three weeks' visit and a feeling of mutual esteem grew up between the two. His Imperial Highness was highly gratified by his appointment as a General in the British Army and during the many conversations he had with Sir Charles on military matters he was much interested in discussing with him the various details of his uniform. At the termination of his visit he conferred on Sir Charles the Order of Grand Officer of the Rising Sun of Japan.

After his departure from England the Crown Prince never met Sir Charles again, but he always maintained his interest in the General's future career. The British Military Attaché in Tokio frequently received enquiries about Sir Charles during the next few years, and the Prince Regent, as he then was, expressed his pleasure on hearing that Sir Charles was appointed Governor of Gibraltar. Shortly before the General's term of Governorship expired, His Imperial Highness sent him a special and personal message of friendship and goodwill.

A gracious compliment was paid by the young Emperor at the time of Sir Charles' funeral in deputing his Military Attaché in London, Colonel the Marquis Mayeda, to attend the service at Westminster Abbey.

<sup>1</sup> Two hundred thousand of past and present members of the Church Lads, Brigade served in the Great War. Amongst other distinctions gained there were 22 V.C.s, 1 K.C.B., 5 C.M.G.s, 36 D.S.O.s, 2 D.S.C.s, 131 M.C.s, 179 D.C.M.s, 498 M.M.s, 60 O.B.E.s, 20 Croix de Guerre, 2 Italian Medals for Valour

<sup>2</sup> Now Brigadier F. S. G. Piggott, D.S.O., R.E.

## CHAPTER XVII

Colonel of The Queen's. Takes his duties seriously. Letters of advice. Anecdote.

CHANCE had placed Monro in a regiment that possesses a fine tradition and a proud reputation. Its unsurpassed discipline does not rest on any martinet methods of control; it is the outcome of high regimental ideals which are, at the same time, in perfect harmony with the practical purposes of soldiering. In this respect, there was a certain affinity between the regimental spirit and Monro's own professional character which may account, to some extent, for his intense affection for The Queen's, which remained undiminished throughout his career.

We have already seen the joy with which he received the news of his appointment as Colonel of the regiment.<sup>1</sup> For him it was no honorary sinecure but a serious duty. A former commanding officer says:

"From May, 1924, when I took over command of the 1st Battalion The Queen's, I received about one letter a fortnight through the first three years of my command, and only a few during my last year when we were in China. The subjects of his letters embraced practically everything. The selection of cadets from R.M.C. was perhaps one of the most important matters to him, and, as the result of some four visits to Sandhurst annually, I was able to give him full reports on the many who were on our waiting list. It was not uncommon to receive more than half a dozen letters, generally eight sides, before each gazette, on these lists. On the two occasions he inspected the battalion in England, he had all the young officers who had joined since he last inspected assembled in the ante-room and had a half-hour chat with them together in a most friendly way.

"In 1925 the battalion won the Army Football Cup for the first time in its history. Sir Charles wired from Gibraltar his congratulations. The next day he cabled, 'Beware of swollen heads. Monro.' In 1926 we were beaten in the first round!

"The majority of Sir Charles' letters to me dealt with the subjects

<sup>1</sup> See p. 249.

of the training of the young officers and the Staff College, but he referred to everything, institutes and cook-houses and their care, sergeants' mess in particular, Army Temperance Association, athletics, leadership within the platoon, tradition, and in 1924, after Irish service, etc., the rebuilding, where necessary, of the old regimental system.<sup>1</sup>

"His inspections were somewhat informal. He first received the General's salute and then spent a long time going round the companies and talking to the non-commissioned officers and men, particularly to those whose fathers had been in the regiment, and he always knew all about them. He would then visit the institutes and messes, and he would tell everybody much more about the history of the silver, trophies and regimental property than any of us knew."

The following letters, written by Sir Charles Monro to the Commanding Officer, the two first from Gibraltar and the last in 1925, are full of wise counsel and illustrate the wide range of the interest he took in his regiment.

"When looking round the mess the other day, it struck me that there was no record on the walls of the mess of several very striking regimental personalities. I refer to Major General Hubert Hamilton—he was one of the most brilliant soldiers that the regiment has ever produced and he was killed commanding a division on active service. Surely here is an instance where the parent should possess a picture of such a faithful son. His brother, General Sir Bruce Hamilton, would, I am sure, help you to procure a good portrait of his brother and there should be a record, underneath or on the frame, of his glorious end.

"Next, you have Brigadier General Hamilton with his meteoric career, culminating in his command of a brigade at the age of twenty-six. Surely, again, the parent should announce her pride in her offspring.

"Major General Bird is, again, a very distinguished soldier of whom the parent is without question justifiably proud. The Sergeants' Mess and Officers' Mess should record their prowess and remember that a generation is springing up to whom the late War will only be a dream. It is our duty to sow the seed at such a fruitful time, to ensure that those who follow us will be at no loss in noble example to arouse and stimulate their

<sup>1</sup> In 1923 the battalion returned from Ireland, where it had gone in 1920 directly it was reformed from cadre, after the War. It had been split up in Ireland in detachments and had neither the time nor the opportunity to put its house in order until after its return to England.

ambition to follow the footsteps so deeply and so finely carved by their predecessors."

"Many congratulations to the Regiment and Evans in the successes achieved in the Army athletic sports announced in the paper to-day—achievements of this character are very valuable to the regiment.

"I have noticed, with some concern, that the number of competitors from the officers for the Staff College seems to be a dwindling factor. I hope you will take this question up very seriously with the officers. It is of the utmost importance that there should be highly-trained officers in the regiment.

"The education of young officers in all military subjects is immeasurably assisted by the presence of officers who have had the precious advantages of two years' training at the Staff College. As for yourself, bear in mind that it rests with you to train the brains of your officers; the latter must remember that an officer nowadays must be able to use his brains quickly and accurately, and unless his brains are exercised they will fail him just as certainly as his muscles fail him if he does not keep them in trim. That is one of the big problems facing a commanding officer at the present day and to tackle it, he must be supported by trained Staff College officers."

"I was very glad to get your letter of the 4th inst. with all the regimental information it included. You are quite right to get rid of the senior non-commissioned officers who are standing in the way of progress. I suggest, however, that their inefficiency is the product of some defect higher up in the military hierarchy. It is a matter of cause and effect. Why was this inefficiency tolerated? Why was it allowed to exist? The answer is beyond me, except the wide definition that the example set by the officers reacts all through the battalion, and usually it is the incapacity of some officer that creates a higher degree of the same defects in the lower ranks.

"You are quite right in your observations about the Sergeants' Mess. It is beating the air to expect efficiency in the battalion if the tone of the Sergeants' Mess is bad. An impure spirit in that institution will upset the whole battalion from top to toe, so get your Sergeants' Mess right as an essential preliminary. By all means improve the institutes. The men must be made comfortable and self-respecting.

"The shooting records are encouraging. Skill in rifle shooting is the product of a properly created public opinion which exercises pressure on the men to improve themselves by practice in the barrack room.

“ It may perhaps interest you to know a matter which is engaging my attention here [Gibraltar] and that is, re-training of young officers and non-commissioned officers. Unless the former are good instructors the training of the non-commissioned officers becomes merely a case of the blind leading the blind. I have called on young officers in order to test their capacity to impart instruction. Much progress is required. The officers must be taught how to teach. If the officers do not know their business, so much more will the non-commissioned officers be useless. A battalion without good section and platoon commanders is a mere rudderless hulk—of no use to anyone. I commend to your immediate notice the taking up of this question. Get sand models in every company and teach the officers how to use them and how to lecture to their men. The officers are very attentive to the physical needs of their bodies—the brain wants some study too.”

General Monro was never tired of conversing with old soldiers, and he had a special gift for getting them to speak freely to him. Whenever it was possible for him to do so, he attended the Old Comrades' dinner of his regiment. On one of these occasions he was talking to two “ real ” old soldiers who were well filled up with good beer, and one of them remarked to the other, “ I mind me, Jim, when we lay at Jullundur, seeing Sir Charles 'ere, walking across the parade ground, and I says to you, ‘ There goes the future Commander-in-Chief in India,’ didn't I, Jim ? ” “ Aye, that you did, Bill,” replied Jim. “ The only weak point in the prophet's statement,” said Sir Charles when narrating the story, “ was that I only joined the regiment two years after it had left Jullundur ! ”

---

## CHAPTER XVIII

### A character study.

SOMETHING of Sir Charles Monro's character is perceptible in the public acts of his life which have been related in the preceding pages. Hythe, the Army Commands in France, Gallipoli, the Indian Command, Gibraltar, combine to give us a portrait, the predominant features of which are "Duty" and "Discipline." Fearlessness of responsibility, sagacity, fixity of purpose, power of concentration, self-abnegation, professional skill, kindness and considerateness, are all there and clearly to be seen. But it is the highly developed sense of duty and of discipline which arrests the eye and gives to the picture its distinctive individuality. And yet the portrait is incomplete. It shows the soldier ; it does not show the whole man. It reveals neither his prejudices and his foibles nor his whole strength.

The full personality of a man is rarely disclosed by his deeds. The most eminent men in history have frequently been men of few deeds. The most distinguished soldiers have not always been those who have taken part in the greatest number of campaigns. It is not so much what a man has done as what he is which regulates the depth of the impression which his personality makes on others. Napoleon became Commander-in-Chief of the French army of Italy through the force of his personality, before he had gained a single one of the victories which placed him later on the topmost pinnacle of fame. In our own Army nearly all the soldiers who rose to the highest positions during the Great War were marked beforehand as men who would assuredly rise to those positions should war occur in their day ; not on account of their past achievements, but because of the confidence which, by reason of the ascendancy of their characters, they had inspired in others during the foregoing years of peace.

Any estimation of a man's character which is formed by observation of his attitude to life is often incorrect and at best merely superficial. A man's character is born with him. It may be expanded or dwarfed ; it cannot be acquired, nor can it be imparted to others. His attitude to life and his opinions are the



product of a variety of influences ; of his social status, his upbringing, his environment, his profession, his successes and his failures.

Sir Charles Monro's character was more than usually open to misjudgment from what appeared on the surface. When he entered a room full of people his presence was felt at once. But the *vera causa* of the impression he made would not be recognized by those who did not know him or who only knew him slightly. His whimsical, sometimes almost fantastic type of humour was apt to be misunderstood, but those who knew him well delighted in his bluff directness and in his "old soldier" stories. His jocularly was often a cloak to his shyness. His manner was genuine through and through, but it served as a cover to a nature that was exceedingly reserved, sensitive, nervous and highly strung.

These are the qualities which go to make a recluse. It was only by the exercise of an almost overpowering self-mastery that he forced them into the background and succeeded in maintaining the dignity of self-assurance which seemed natural to him. The struggle had two important results. In the first place, it made him intensely human and sympathetic ; secondly, it gave him an idea of the value of discipline which was sometimes overstrained. He was extremely shy concerning the things on which he felt most deeply. On one occasion in France a member of his staff conceived the idea of having his health drunk at dinner, on the anniversary of his wedding day. It was not a success. He hated the publicity given to something which was, to him, inexpressibly intimate and sacred.

Looking at Sir Charles, one thought of him as a solid rock that nothing could shake. So he was. But it was apparent to anyone who lived or served in close contact with him that it was the spirit within the rock which held it in impervious solidity. It is related by one of his staff that he spent the whole of the night of the evacuation of Suvla in hobbling up and down, up and down in his cabin. (He could not walk properly on account of his damaged foot.) His anxiety, not for himself, although disaster would have probably ended his career, but for the success of the enterprise and the fate of troops, would not allow him a moment's rest.

He was far from being an adventurer. He never sought adventures and was not in the least "happy as a lover" when faced with a crisis. A big command was to him a duty and a service rather than an opportunity. He had nothing of the gambler's spirit and would never take an unnecessary risk. He was

cautious in his attitude to big issues and trusted in long thought out preparation rather than in inspirations. This does not mean that he was deficient in the offensive spirit. Far from it. During the period of trench warfare in France he was constantly harping on the necessity of worrying the Germans and keeping them thoroughly occupied, but he would sooner have no trench raids at all than raids which were not prepared beforehand with meticulous care and which left as little to chance as was humanly possible. He hated doing anything, whether on service or in ordinary life, without the fullest preparation. The idea of muddling through or just trusting to luck was abhorrent to him.

He was ambitious only in the best sense of the term. That is to say, he had no ambition to rise above others, but only to rise above himself. He never sought advancement. It is doubtful whether promotion to a higher command, at the first moment of receiving it, gave him any feeling of pleasure, partly perhaps because he always became enamoured of the command he was holding at the time and was reluctant to leave it. He did not, for instance, receive the information that he was to leave the 1st Corps in order to take command of the newly formed Third Army with any feeling of satisfaction, still less of elation. The appointment came as a complete surprise. It was, therefore, a shock to him when he went to visit Lord French after taking up his new appointment to realize, from the frigid nature of his reception, and from Lord French's remarks, that he was suspected of having intrigued to get the Third Army command. The coldness continued up to the time he left to go to the Dardanelles, and is attributable to the above reason and to the fact that Lord French's own recommendation had been turned down in favour of Sir Charles. By the time Lord French vacated the command in France, he realized how greatly he had misjudged him and when, later, he met Sir Charles in London, he begged him not to go to India on the grounds that in a certain eventuality he might be required to fill a still higher post in France than that of an Army Commander.

His consideration for the feelings of those who were professionally less successful than himself was particularly noticeable. During the course of the War he passed over the heads of many men who had previously been senior to him. When any of these happened to come to his headquarters, he always treated them with the same respect as if they were still his seniors, addressing major generals and lieutenant generals as "sir" when he himself was a full general.

His treatment of elderly "dug-outs" who came to France

in command of divisions or in high appointments for which they subsequently proved unfitted and whom it became his duty to remove from their positions, was very sympathetic, and they would return to England without any feeling of soreness or resentment. It was in marked contrast to the manner of dismissal adopted by one or two other high commanders. After all, they had come forward with the idea of doing their best for the country and, in any case, they had shown the right way to many a younger man. It was all part and parcel of his great-hearted sympathy, his grace and his nobility. His attitude to his personal servants bordered on the quixotic. His heart was almost too tender.

Sir Charles combined the qualities of his Scottish father and Irish mother in a surprising manner. One might almost say that he was Scotch when on duty and Irish when off duty. But that would only be partially true, for his Irish imagination and sense of the dramatic often showed themselves in his official life. They would account for the remarkable faculty he possessed for addressing troops. His addresses were inspiring and sometimes of a kind to "carry one off one's feet."

It must be admitted that his imagination sometimes ran away with him, especially in his estimate of other men, and warped his judgment of character. He would form a mental picture of a man and then his imagination would get going and eventually the man would be unrecognizable. He might have been transmuted into a superman or into an individual hardly good enough to gain admittance into the lower regions.

Off duty, he was almost all Irish. He had a great store of anecdotes and stories, in the narration of which he would be superbly dramatic and magnificently regardless of the strict facts. He would, for instance, give a graphic description of the sensations of being in an aeroplane for the first time, without ever having experienced that "first time" himself. His highly developed sense of humour and of the dramatic would lead him to say anything, and one soon learnt that his stories were not intended to be taken for anything else than what they were. They were just very good stories. But the moment any action was required, any duty to be performed, the Scotch side of him took charge and he became a dead realist. He cared not for phrases, every thought was fixed on realities.

One pictures him as a soldier, and this was the only picture he had of himself. But he was something else, although his attitude towards every phase of his life's work was based on the strictly military idea of service and duty. He had in him the qualities of a first-class diplomatist, as was seen by his service

in India and his unique success as Governor of Gibraltar. The French Consul at Simla once remarked in connection with him, "You English are the most extraordinary people. In the middle of the biggest war you have ever had you send your best diplomat to India." He would, in fact, have excelled as a diplomat because, apart from his force of character, he had an extraordinary way of getting on with all sorts and conditions of men.

One of his aides-de-camp writes: "I remember going with him once on July 14th to the French Consul's house in Simla to offer his respects to this representative of our ally. He made a very short speech in French, but to such effect that the Consul very nearly wept." Not one diplomat in a thousand could do that. He had the capacity for throwing himself into a dramatic situation and expressing himself accordingly. The fact is, he was a natural orator and could, when the occasion arose, forget his own opinions whilst appealing to those of his audience.

On one occasion in France he was proposing at dinner the health of an elderly member of his staff whom he had arranged should be sent home as being useless. Sir Charles spoke of him with such grace and feeling that the old gentleman nearly broke down. Sir Charles' real opinion of him was frequently expressed as "that d d old fool." This incident might be taken as an instance of insincerity on his part. It was something quite different. He would get carried away by his kindness of heart and his sense of the dramatic. As he proposed the old gentleman's health, his sympathy for him made him forget his real opinion, and few people could express sympathy in the way that he could. It was perhaps because he felt things so deeply himself.

On another occasion after his return from India, when he was the guest of honour at a large public dinner at which the writer was present, he began his speech in reply to the toast of his health with the words, "This is the proudest moment of my life"—of course it was nothing of the sort; he must have experienced many much prouder moments. But there is no doubt in the writer's mind that the words, spoken in tones of conviction and sincerity, were truly meant at the minute they were uttered.

He had an exceptionally good memory of people whom he met, never forgot a face, and generally recollected everything connected with it which had come in any way to his notice.

He was inclined to be superstitious in a small way. He was genuinely upset one day at the time of his command of the 1st Corps when a single magpie suddenly flew up close to him. As it happened, it was the day on which he was to hear of his

appointment to the command of the Third Army. He had quite an exceptional penchant for Rabelaisian stories, the only explanation for which seems to be that, like Shakespeare, he could have every mood.

He was very retiring and shrank from doing anything which might bring him before the public eye. He never looked on commands or honours as stepping stones to higher things. He once told the writer that he had gone much farther than his performances merited; that he had got much more than he deserved. Indeed, his modesty was one of his most noticeable traits. It was not the pseudo-modesty which takes the egotistical form of proclaiming on every possible occasion the unworthiness of the recipient for the rewards or advancement which have been bestowed on him.

On their own merits, men of worth are dumb. He never talked about his career and only briefly alluded to it on one or two occasions in communications with closest friends. Although the credit for the remarkable shooting of the "Old Contemptible" Army was primarily due to him, the writer cannot remember that he ever once mentioned in his hearing that he had been either Chief Instructor or Commandant at Hythe.

He writes to one with whom he was most intimate and under whose command he once served: "It is very generous of you to refer in such a generous way to the prospect of my promotion; as for myself, I don't think of it. I know better than anyone that my career in the Army has been a mere accident and that I have risen out of all proportion to my deserts. So I am more than content with my good fortune."

He always attributed the success of any undertaking for which he was responsible, whether in the field or of an administrative nature, to the work of his subordinates. Although the evacuation of Gallipoli was one of the outstanding feats of the War, he would accept none of the credit of it, but when congratulated thereon, he would wave his hand and say, "It is to Birdwood, Byng and Davis and their respective staffs, plus the Navy, that the honour is due."

He bore his troubles with the dignity and courage which often turns evils into blessings, and he treated the unjust criticisms to which he was on certain occasions subjected—"the spurns which patient merit of the unworthy takes"—with silent contempt.

Sir Charles Monro's ideas on life are easier to comprehend than his character, complicated as this was by the clash of the Scotch and Irish temperaments. Everything was based on the

soldier's standard of service, duty, order and discipline, all leading up to the State with a capital "S" or, in our case, the Empire with a capital "E." In his mind *every* man should be a soldier of the Empire. He had an immense belief in conscription, for two separate reasons. Firstly, because he thought it the only way of ensuring the safety of the Empire and secondly because he held that military life was the highest social and moral training a man could have. He looked on a soldier's life in the same way as a clergyman thinks of his ministry, namely as a calling rather than a profession.

The Empire that he had in his mind was an ideal empire to which our own should be made to approximate. It was essentially to be a military Empire. Its rulers should be gentlemen, using that term in its best sense and not the narrower one of birth, and all its citizens should be soldiers. The rulers themselves should not escape military service. He used to say that all ministers of the Crown should go through the Staff College.

According to him the standard by which a man should be judged was, "Is he one who would make an Empire-builder?" When he passed a slouching civilian with his hands in his pockets, he would say, "Is that fellow an Empire-builder?" The older he grew, the stronger became his idea of the Empire. "This great Empire" was constantly his refrain when addressing troops, or cadets or schools. He was furious with a former War Minister for saying in Parliament that he did not know when Empire Day was, and would comment on this remark years afterwards.

The amateurishness, easy good-nature and individualism of the average Englishman irritated him. He disliked the works of that most English of English writers, Dickens. He would often contrast the amateurish way in which the English play games with the professional seriousness of the Americans. Likewise he would deplore our happy-go-lucky business methods compared with the thoroughness of German methods. When marching up to Mons in 1914 he made the men of his division march with fixed bayonets, "in order," he said, "to try and make them understand that they were in for something more serious than a football match."

He was wont to say that what Englishmen wanted was to undergo a sentence of despotism, in order to make them do what they were told and not talk. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the Empire as it exists is a very different thing from the Empire of his dreams. In many ways, his outlook was more

German than English. "The Germans," he said, "were the only people who put a proper value on their soldiers." The qualities he most admired were those which one generally associates with Prussia, viz. the professional as opposed to the amateur spirit, intense seriousness, government by experts, discipline, order, the military spirit in all walks of life, careful preparation towards a definite objective, the spirit of service running through all grades of society from highest to lowest.

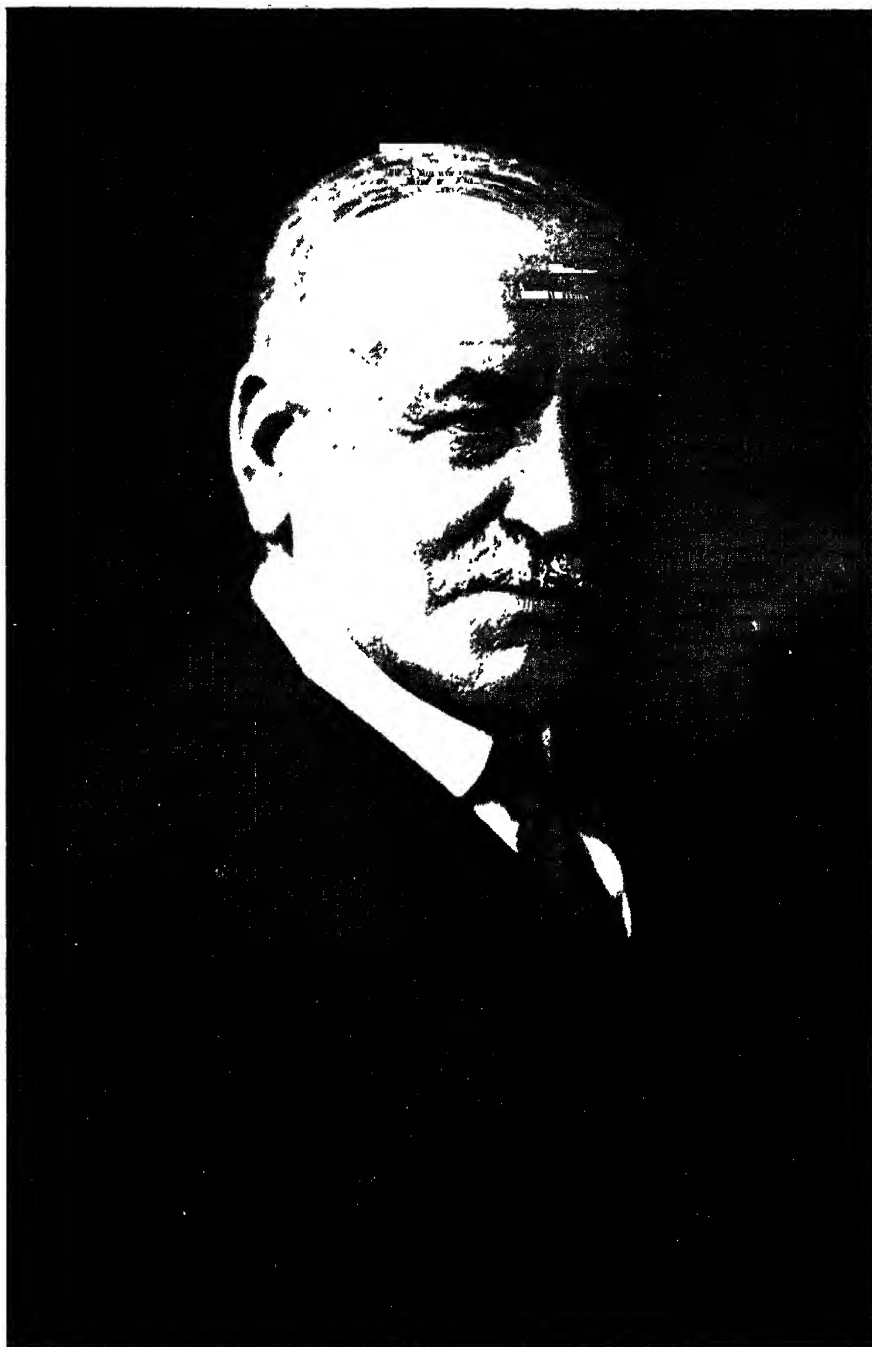
A nephew of Sir Charles writes: "After the War I went to Oxford and read history. Among the books I was given to read was a political treatise by Frederic the Great. It was amazing; I might have been reading my uncle's words. There was the same feeling that a soldier's life is the highest social training a man, and a nation, can have. My uncle's whole outlook on life was to be found expressed therein."

His idea of freedom coincided with that of the old Greek world, where the free-man's freedom of speech was allied with the free-man's responsibility to take counsel for, and fight the battles of the State.

He was not interested in politics, that is in party politics. If anything he was a Conservative. Incidentally, one of his *bêtes noires* in history was Burke, the father, one might say, of English Conservatism. Sir Charles used to call him a "blathering Irishman," and never forgave him for his attacks on Warren Hastings. His chief heroes were all of the Empire-building type—Warren Hastings, Rhodes, Scott (the Explorer), etc., etc. He was astounded at what he thought was the indifference of the Government at Scott's death.

Although leaning towards Conservatism, Sir Charles had certain affinities with Socialism. This followed to some extent his conception of every citizen being the servant of an omnipotent state. A *sine qua non* of the men at the head of affairs was that they should be gentlemen, not necessarily by birth, but nature's gentlemen "in truth and honour, freedom and courtesy." His highest praise of any man was conveyed in the words: "He is a great gentleman."

If he had certain things in common with both Conservatives and Socialists he had little in common with Liberalism. He was fiercely indignant with Lord Morley and those who resigned office at the beginning of the War. "Damn their conscience," he said. "When their country was in danger, they had no right to have a conscience." And he would enlarge at length on the despicability of a man who would take government office and not accept one of its first responsibilities.



SIR CHARLES MONRO, 1925





He greatly resented the expenditure of time and energy caused by Mr. Montagu's visit to India at a season when every thought and hour of work should, he considered, be devoted to winning the War. If the War was lost, Mr. Montagu's plans would probably come to naught. Meanwhile every effort in India should be concentrated on producing men and munitions, and ever more men and munitions.

As Commander-in-Chief in India he was a member of the Government and the line he took on various problems was characteristic of his outlook. On one occasion when there was a discussion in Council on the appeals against death sentences passed by the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, he refused to go into the question of the justice or injustice of the sentences. He said, in effect, "Sir Michael O'Dwyer is a cleverer man and is also in a much better position to judge than I am. If he thinks the man ought to be hanged, he must be hanged."

He was not interested in legal niceties. One of his complaints about government in England was that it was too much in the hands of lawyers. Abstract justice was of little importance. The individual must, if necessary, suffer for the good of the community. The one thing that mattered was that the State must be obeyed by the highest as well as the lowest.

During 1917-18 the Government of India made various efforts to placate the Indian agitators. Sir Michael O'Dwyer made a speech in the Assembly which was nothing less than a vigorous attack on the Government's policy. From what one knows of Sir Charles' character and opinions there is little doubt that he agreed in principle with Sir Michael O'Dwyer, but he blamed him for making the speech because it ran counter to his rigid ideas of discipline. For the same reason he thought General Gough's action in connection with the Curragh affair in 1914 utterly wrong. The soldier had one duty, viz. to do what he was told and not talk. The Government, right or wrong, must be supported by its servants.<sup>1</sup> Some soldiers will think that Government can put too great a strain on their loyalty and that when called on to do something in the nature of "dirty work" merely in order to get the Government out of a mess of its own making, they are justified in protesting.

He considered that the trade unions were obtaining too much political influence and would have to be fought some day if the

<sup>1</sup> If Sir Charles had known and accepted the facts, as they are related on page 192 of *The Life of Field Marshal Sir John French* by his son, he would probably have modified his criticism of General Gough's action in the Curragh affair.

Government was to retain an unhampered supremacy. During the General Strike he was, with difficulty, prevented from offering his services as a porter !

He was a lover of music and art in every form. He had a keen appreciation of the beautiful in landscape and architecture. He never missed an opportunity of visiting an old church for the sake of its historical and traditional interest as much as for whatever artistic merit it might possess. He read much, especially histories and biographies. He did not care greatly for poetry, although he had a keen appreciation of the music of prose and the sound of words and phrases. He would quote Stevenson again and again. The language of the Bible appealed to his sense of the beautiful and he considered some of the prayers in the Book of Common Prayer superb.

He had a retentive memory and was always eager to acquire knowledge and explore fresh fields of interest, with an unflagging capacity for enjoying every detail of life as it came along. As for Religion, he cared not so much for a religion whose aim it is to get a man to Heaven, as for a religion which endeavours to get Heaven into the man. He believed with Bacon, that "religion is the bond of unity in a State." For this reason he always went to church when he was holding a command, and often in civilian life. When in India, he insisted on all the officers at Army Headquarters going to church regularly, an order which caused a considerable amount of indignation. He was always eager to effect co-operation between the Army and the Church. He once asked a senior officer of his staff who had an exceptional knowledge of the Indian Army, why it was that British officers of the Indian Army hardly ever went to church. He was told that they often served at places where there was no church and that they probably got out of the habit.

The Church parade with its attendant ceremonies was, for him, the outward and visible sign of the respect and honour which the Sovereign's soldiers owed to the King of kings—the only Ruler of princes.

He did not care for the Psalms because of what he called their "whining" attitude, always asking God to go and smash the enemy instead of going and doing it oneself. He overlooked the fact that the principal author of the Psalms, while appealing to his God for help and leaving nothing to chance, never hesitated to go out and fight his enemies himself, until his own people insisted that he should no longer accompany the army in person, after which he sent his troops on many occasions to fight under his Commander-in-Chief.

Knowing his views on Empire, one can readily imagine his ideas on education. They were not the usual English ideas. To him, education was not an end in itself. The end was the making of good citizens who would maintain the Great Empire which had been built up by their forefathers. He was appalled by the unmilitariness of English education. He would have liked to have had a military flavouring in our public schools and he had little use for compulsory classical education. "What can be more futile," he would say, "than spending years and years reading a dead language?"

Although an endeavour has been made to represent faithfully Sir Charles Monro's opinions on things generally, it has to be remembered, as has been pointed out, that when off duty he was wholly Irish and that, when he expressed his opinions, he nearly always was off duty. The consequence was that he often said more and said it more forcibly than he really meant. For instance, he would curse all civilians. "There are no honest men but soldiers and sailors." But when his work brought him in contact with civilians he worked with them cordially and often conceived a great admiration for some of them, a feeling which was reciprocated on their part. He simply took them as they came, the same as in his relations with soldiers. But, alike for soldier or civilian, rich or poor, high-born or low-born, the expression of his highest esteem or admiration was: "He is a great gentleman."

Again, there was no reason for him to draw the line between the ideal and the practical. It was easy, for example, to proclaim that England ought to have conscription when he had not to face its practical consequences or answer the arguments which might be brought forward against it. When pronouncing his views he was speaking of ideal and not practical politics, which are poles apart.

His ideas were the antithesis of those held by the majority of Englishmen, in illustration of which may be instanced his frequently expressed opinion that certain subjects should be legally forbidden to be caricatured in public or in the Press. Such subjects were the Army, the Navy, the Church and the Law. It was good, no doubt, for Englishmen to hear sometimes the tremendously forcible expression of opinions which were diametrically opposed to their own. But it is doubtful whether the English race would have expanded and taken so prominent a part in history as it has done had it developed along the lines advocated by Sir Charles Monro.

His military character has been exemplified in the account of

his military service and performances, but his attitude to military life requires some notice. The one institution of which he always spoke with unqualified affection was The Queen's Royal Regiment. We have seen his jubilation on being appointed Colonel of The Queen's;<sup>1</sup> it was the appointment he coveted above all others. An officer who had been a pupil of his at Hythe relates that when he attended the Monro wedding and entered the reception room, which was full of beautiful gifts, Charles Monro came up to him, a telegram in his hand, and said, "Look, this is the best wedding present I have had." It was a telegram of congratulations from his old colour-sergeant.

One might almost sum up his feeling for The Queen's in Byron's lines :

"Woman's love and friendship's zeal, dear as both have been  
to me,

What are they to all I feel, with a soldier's love for thee."

He had a strong belief in the value of inculcating the idea of discipline and the military spirit into boys at an early age and he envied the Navy that they got their officers in their early 'teens. Drill and turn-out were of the highest importance to him. Nor for a moment would he permit, in the corps and armies he commanded in France, the sartorial irregularities which found favour in some other formations, such as the wearing of hunting stocks in uniform or the carrying of hunting crops.

The general order which Sir Charles Napier once issued on the same subject and which began, "All men have fancy, few have taste," would have thoroughly appealed to him. He forbade the wearing of khaki slacks in India although, with an inconsistency which was excusable by reason of the climate, he put them on himself directly he went touring in the plains in the summer.

He detested the terms "Tommy" and "Private" as ridiculous. He would have preferred the French designation of "Soldier . . ."

It must not be inferred from anything which has been said concerning Sir Charles' military instincts that he had a natural desire for War. Soldiers seldom have. He hated the act of war, as may be gathered from his private correspondence.

This estimation of Sir Charles Monro's character is an appreciation by one who served with him in peace and war and knew him well. Whether it be right or wrong, there are two indisputable facts. His presence brought the sunshine of life into whatever

<sup>1</sup> See letter to Viceroy, page 249.

company he entered<sup>1</sup> and "honour, love, obedience, troops of friends" were attracted to him in ever-increasing abundance throughout his career and remained with him until he had finished his course.

He had been troubled for some time with an internal complaint. He was taken seriously ill on the evening of November 30th. An operation was performed but it was of no avail. He had reached the eventide victorious over "fear and favour," and during the night of December 6th-7th, 1929, the spirit of a Great Gentleman returned to God Who gave it.

<sup>1</sup> His mere presence in India in those days of stress and anxiety, followed by the painful aftermath of 1919-20, was an asset which cannot well be weighed and can certainly not be expressed adequately in words. He diffused among us a serene cheerfulness which was worth perhaps even more than the material efficiency for which he laboured so successfully. His kindness, his courageous acceptance of all that came to him in the way of responsibility and care; and, perhaps, above all, the lovable humour that shone through all his goings-out and comings-in. . . ." Extract of letter from Sir Claude Hill, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., Member of Viceroy's Council, 1915-17.

---

## CHAPTER XIX

The last scene.

CHARLES MONRO had his limitations, as set forth in the preceding chapter. Fame has not inscribed his name on the roll of her most illustrious sons. He never hearkened to her call. Living truly, he saw truly and listened alone to the Inner Voice which sang to him of Truth, Honour and High Endeavour. He was one of those men who, through the harmony of their lives, enrich the sad music of humanity.

"He knew," said Bishop Hicks of Gibraltar, "as few in my experience have known, how to serve in ruling, and, without any abatement, for one moment, of the dignity and authority of his position, so to command as always to be loved, and so to exercise power as to make those over whom he exercised it his friends. . . .

"You knew, as you enjoyed his warmth of heart, his humour, his playfulness, his ready displays of affection, that what gave the whole its grace and charm was the largeness of mind that was content to let others gain credit that might have been appropriated to himself, and the strength of conscience that had enabled him to follow what seemed the right course at whatever cost. . . ."

He had lost much through his obedience to the dictates of Duty. He had been selected for the chief command in India, because of the confidence which was felt in him above all others, to develop to the full her potentialities at the extreme hour of the Empire's need.

If he had remained in France he would have received the peerage and the money grant which was awarded to the other Army Commanders. When, the opportunity occurring, the bâton of Field Marshal was not bestowed on him, the whole Army wondered. Friends and comrades, all who knew him or had ever served with him were indignant. It was his by right of seniority, services and record. Why was it? There are some who think that it was on account of political enmity caused by his own recommendations for the evacuation of Gallipoli, but one would not willingly attribute such petty vindictiveness to

any man. He never complained. He accepted the successes of life with modesty and bore outrageous fortune with silent dignity.<sup>1</sup> He never stooped to the device employed by some meaner natures in order to obtain a setting for their own reputations, namely, the dispraise of other men. He has left behind him a memory of fine companionship, unquenchable gaiety and great achievements.

Sir Charles died during the night of December 6th-7th. The Dean of Westminster came forward at once with the offer that, as Bath King at Arms, Sir Charles Monro's body should rest during the night preceding the funeral service in Henry VII's Chapel, which is the Chapel in the Abbey where hang the banners of the Knights Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath. It is not the custom to give a military funeral to a retired officer, but in consideration of Sir Charles' distinguished services, the War Office decided to waive precedent and the service was held, with the accompaniment of full military ceremony, in Westminster Abbey.

It was attended by a great congregation, men and women, witnesses to the affection which he inspired in all who met him in the way of life. There were present representatives of the King, the Prince of Wales and other members of the Royal Family. The Navy was represented by the First Sea Lord, the Air Force by the Marshal of the Air. The Army Council attended. There were representatives of the Order of the Bath and of the following associations with which Sir Charles was, or at some time had been, connected, viz. the Royal School for Officers' Daughters, the Royal Army Temperance Association, the Officers' Families' Fund, the Territorial Army and Territorial Rifle Association, the Officers' Association, the Army Headquarters Association of India, the Royal Patriotic Fund Corporation, the Imperial War Graves Commission, the Soldiers', Sailors', and Airmen's Association, the County of London Territorial Army Association, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, the Ada Leigh Homes, the Church Lads' Brigade.

A detachment of The Queen's with the Regimental Colour furnished the Guard of Honour, and there were present detachments from the 4th and 6th Territorial battalions of The Queen's and from the 22nd and 24th London Regiments.

Few who were present in Westminster Abbey on the morning

<sup>1</sup> Writing to his elder brother on March 13th, 1921, he says: "Thank you for your two welcome letters, especially the letter in which you express yourself with vigour as to the little recognition accorded to me; as to that, I don't think of it or regard it more than 'the crackling of the thorns under the pot.' What do small items of that kind matter?"



of December 11th, 1929, will forget the solemn scene. The coffin, with the Union Jack, on which were placed the headdress and sword and a wreath of white lilies, had been brought from Henry VII's Chapel and placed at the foot of the High Altar where, not many years before, Charles Monro had stood to marry Mary O'Hagan. The service was conducted by the Dean, assisted by the Abbey clergy. The one hundred and twenty-first Psalm, the words of the anthem and the hymns were selected by Lady Monro as being those that Sir Charles had been especially fond of. The prayer "O Lord, support us all day long of this troublous life, until the shades lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over and our work done. Then, Lord, in Thy mercy, grant us safe lodging, a holy rest and peace at the last," he used to carry in his pocket-book.

At the conclusion of the service the buglers of The Queen's sounded the "Last Post," followed by the "Reveille," and when the last note had died away the coffin of the dead General was borne down the aisle by senior non-commissioned officers of The Queen's, to the strain of the Dead March played by the band of the Welsh Guards, on its way to the last resting-place in Brompton Cemetery.<sup>1</sup>

Charles Carmichael Monro, by due steps aspiring, had laid his

" . . . just hands on that Golden Key  
that opes the Palace of Eternity."

<sup>1</sup> The pall bearers were General Sir Archibald Murray, General Sir Havelock Hudson, General Sir George Barrow, General Sir Robert Whigham, General Sir George Kirkpatrick, Lieutenant General Sir Edward Altham, Lieutenant General Sir Thomas Scott, Lieutenant General Sir George MacMunn. The Queen's Royal Regiment was represented by Lieutenant Colonel Hunter commanding the 2nd Battalion and Major Roberts, Captain Girling and Lieutenant Chitty.

## HONOURS BESTOWED ON GENERAL SIR CHARLES MONRO

C.B.	.	.	.	.	1906
K.C.B.	.	.	.	.	1915
G.C.M.G.	.	.	.	.	1916
G.C.S.I.	.	.	.	.	1919
G.C.B.	.	.	.	.	1919
Created Baronet	.	.	.	.	1921
Appointed Bath King-at-Arms	.	.	.	.	1921
Aide-de-Camp General to The King					1918-1922

Grand Officer of the Légion d'Honneur, 1916  
 Grand Officer of the Rising Sun of Japan.

March, 1928, appointed a Trustee of the British War Museum in place of the late Earl Haig.

Colonel of the Queen's Royal Regiment.  
 Hon. Colonel of the 23rd Battalion London Regiment, T.A.



# INDEX

## A

Achi Baba, 70, 81  
 Afghanistan, 161, 164, 166, 168, 192,  
 193, 195, 219, 223-236, 244, 245,  
 247, 249  
 Ahwaz, 154  
 Aire, 106  
 Aisne, 41, 43  
 Akalgarh, 203  
 Aldershot, 23  
 Alexandretta, 84, 85  
 Alexandria, 60, 61, 67, 69, 77, 79,  
 105  
 Allenby, Field Marshal Lord, 17, 55,  
 62, 109, 167, 174, 242  
 Altham, General Sir E., 60, 100, 132,  
 151, 235, 280  
 Amanullah, Amir of Afghanistan,  
 224, 225, 226  
 Amara, 155  
 Ambala, 21  
 Amritsar, 177, 182, 183, 186, 187,  
 191-196, 198, 200, 202, 203, 206,  
 207, 208, 212, 215, 217, 218, 219,  
 221  
 Anzac, 67, 68, 81, 82, 86, 91, 92, 95,  
 96, 99, 101, 103  
*Aragon*, The H.T., 80  
 Armentières, 109  
 Armstrong, Lieutenant General St.  
 G. B., 60  
 Asquith, Lord, 91  
 Aubers Ridge, 48  
 Auchinbowie, 18, 41, 42, 253  
 Ayas Bay, 86

## B

Baber Shum Shere Jung, General  
 Sir, 144  
 Baghdad, 65, 66, 87, 154-156, 158,  
 163-165

Balfour, Lord, 90, 92  
 Bannu, 227  
 Barrow, General Sir G. de S., 15,  
 106, 210, 280  
 Basra, 154, 156, 157, 161  
 Beauquesne, 49  
 Béthune, 47, 48, 108, 109  
 Beynon, Major General, 197, 198,  
 213  
 Biddulph, General Sir R., 22  
 Bingley, Lieutenant General Sir A.,  
 151, 235  
 Bird, Major General Sir W., 34, 262  
 Birdwood, Field Marshal Sir W., 69,  
 73, 75-79, 82, 83, 88, 90, 96, 97,  
 99, 100, 101, 248, 270  
 Blackburne, The Rev. H. W., 108  
 Booth, Major W. H., 23  
 Brackenbury, The Rev., 20  
 Bray, Sir Denys, 231  
 Briand, Monsieur, 91  
 Bridges, Major, 48, 235, 256  
 Byng, General Lord, 68, 69, 73, 89,  
 270

## C

Cairo, 64  
 Campbell, Lieutenant General Sir  
 Walter, 48  
 Campbell, Lieutenant General Sir  
 W. Pitcairn, 37  
 Capper, Major General Sir T., 38  
 Carrington, Lieutenant General Sir  
 F., 22  
 Caulfield, Brigadier General, 217,  
 218  
 Chaman, 227, 228  
 Chamberlain, Sir Austen, 134  
 Chandra Shum Shere, Maharajah,  
 Sir, 144  
 Château Jumelle, 106  
 Château Philomel, 107  
*Chatham*, H.M.S., 77, 79

Chelmsford, Lord, 118, 126, 133, 134,  
135, 148, 176, 225, 233, 242, 249  
Chenevix-Trench, Captain F. N., 44  
Chirol, Sir Valentine, 205  
Choques, 47  
Churchill, Mr. Winston, 56, 58, 62,  
69, 70, 72, 74, 83, 87, 91, 92, 93,  
94, 97, 172, 217  
Clémenceau, 107, 206  
Collins, Colonel W. F., 114  
Collins, Brigadier R. J., 44-46  
Colville, Admiral Sir S., 260  
Colvin, Ian, 209  
Congreve, Sir W., 29, 34, 36  
Connaught, H.R.H. the Duke of,  
221  
Connaught, Prince Arthur of, 106  
Constantinople, 52, 53, 61, 64, 65,  
66, 83  
*Cornwallis*, H.M.S., 105  
Cox, General Sir H., 76  
Cox, Sir Percy, 156, 158  
Cronje, General, 25  
Curzon, Lord, 75, 87-89, 121, 217

## D

Dacca, 227, 230  
Dalbandin, 160  
Dardanelles, 52, 53, 55, 57, 66, 74,  
89-93, 96  
Dardanelles Commission, 54, 60, 61,  
68, 72, 83, 86, 91, 101  
Davies, Lieutenant General Sir  
F. J., 68, 69, 73, 90  
de Robeck, Admiral J., 76, 83, 100,  
101  
Derby, Lord, 101  
Dobbs, Sir Henry, 232  
Dobell, Major General Sir C., 217  
Driefontein, 24  
Dublin, 37  
Duff, General Sir B., 122, 123, 133,  
154, 248  
Dyer, Brigadier General R. E. H.,  
177, 183-221

## E

Edinburgh, 19  
Egerton, Major General G. G. A.,  
29, 34, 36, 42  
Esher Committee, 244, 246

## F

Falkener, Sir Frederick, 37  
Fanshawe, Lieutenant General Sir  
E. A., 76  
Festubert, 48  
Fisher, Admiral Lord, 93  
Fitzmaurice, Commodore S. M., 101  
Foch, Marshal, 17, 109  
Forsett, Major I. W., 44  
Freemantle, Sir A., 20  
French, Field Marshal Lord, 45, 267,  
273

## G

Gallipoli, 15, 52, 53, 55-57, 61,  
63-66, 68-78, 82, 84-88, 93,  
95-99, 101, 102, 104, 105, 110,  
135, 175, 217, 236, 245, 265, 270,  
278  
Gandhi, 178, 179, 180, 203  
Gibraltar, 22, 23, 253-259, 261, 262,  
264, 265, 269  
Givenchy, 46, 48  
Godley, General Sir A. J., 76  
Gough, General Sir H., 273  
Grant, Sir Hamilton, 222, 231, 232  
Grenfell, Lord, 36  
Guernsey, 23  
Gujranwala, 181, 203

## H

Habibullah, Amir of Afghanistan,  
223, 224  
Hafizabad, 203  
Haig, Field Marshal Earl, 17, 36, 41,  
42, 44-46, 114, 259  
Hamadan, 157  
Hamilton, General Sir Bruce, 262  
Hamilton, Major General Sir H., 38,  
262  
Hamilton, General Sir Ian, 50, 53,  
54, 58, 61, 62, 72, 73, 103, 104  
Hardinge, Lord, 133  
Hazebrouck, 45  
Heath, Major General Sir R., 106  
Helles, 59, 81, 82, 86, 87, 89, 91, 96,  
97, 99, 101, 104, 105  
Hill, Sir Claude, 277  
Hinges, 46, 106  
Holland, Sir T., 148, 150, 151  
Hooge, 43, 44

Horne, General Lord, 79, 259  
 Howse, Brigadier General Sir N. R., 60  
 Hudson, General Sir H., 132, 151, 280  
 Hunter, Lieutenant Colonel H. N. A., 280  
 Hunter, Lord, and his Committee, 180-182, 189-191, 193, 194, 198-200, 207, 209, 210, 212, 213, 216, 218  
 Hythe, School of Musketry, 15, 25, 27-36, 265, 270, 276

I

Imbros, 67, 99  
 Isfahan, 154

J

Jackson, Sir Henry, 92  
 Jacob, Field Marshal Sir C., 234  
 Jacob, Lady, 251  
 Jallianwala Bagh, 182-193, 195, 196, 197, 201-206, 208, 215-217  
 Jamrud, 227  
 Japan, Crown Prince of, 260  
 Jelalabad, 229  
 Jerablus, 164  
 Joffre, Marshal, 106, 109  
 Jullundur, 213, 217, 264

K

Kamini Kumar Chandra, Mr., 217-218  
 Kasur, 181, 194  
 Kelly-Kenny, General Sir T., 23-26, 31  
 Kephalos Bay, 67  
 Kerr, Colonel F. W., 44  
 Keyes, Admiral Sir R., 74, 76, 78, 79, 90  
 Kilid Bahr, 70, 81, 84  
 Kirkpatrick, General Sir G., 151, 154, 223, 234, 280  
 Kitchener, Field Marshal Earl, 23, 53, 63, 64, 70, 72, 73, 75-79, 81-91, 93, 96, 106, 123, 129, 130, 217, 246, 248  
 Kitchlew, Dr., 194, 195  
 Kut-el-Amara, 155-157, 160, 163

L

La Buissière, 48  
 Lahore, 181, 203  
 Lampson, Sir M., 260  
 Law, Mr. Bonar, 89, 103  
 Lawson, General, 36  
 Le Cateau, 36  
*Liberty*, The yacht, 80  
 Lillers, 107, 114  
 Lloyd, General Sir F., 22  
 Lomax, Major General S. H., 36, 43, 44  
*Lord Nelson*, H.M.S., 79, 92  
 Lovett, Sir V., 142  
 Lynden-Bell, Major General Sir A., 48, 62  
 Lyttleton, General Sir N., 36, 37, 38  
 Lyttleton, Lady, 36

M

McCardie, Mr. Justice, 183, 198, 199, 200, 210  
 Macartney, Lieutenant Colonel F., 235  
 McMahon, Sir H., 64, 75, 78, 79  
 MacMunn, General Sir G., 60, 280  
 Madden, Judge, 37  
 Mahon, General Sir B., 95  
*Maid of Judah*, Sailing ship, 19  
 Malakwai, 123  
 Malta, 20, 21, 95  
 Marne, 43  
 Marshall, Lieutenant General Sir W. R., 76, 167  
 Maude, General Sir S., 76, 141, 154-159, 164-165, 167  
 Maurice, Major General Sir F., 23  
 Maxse, General Sir Ivor, 20  
 Maxwell, General Sir J., 64, 75, 77-79, 88  
 May, Major General Sir E. G., 29  
 Mayeda, Colonel the Marquis, 260  
 Melbourne, 19  
 Mercer, Major General Sir F., 106  
 Mesopotamia, 53, 74-76, 131, 133, 135, 136, 138, 140, 141, 145-147, 150-154, 158-161, 163-166, 169, 173, 175, 222, 223, 235, 242, 246, 248  
 Metternich, Count, 97  
 Meyer, Sir W., 139

Milner, Lord, 75  
 Miranshah, 227  
 Monro, Sir Alexander, of Bearcroft, 18  
 Monro, Dr. Alexander (primus), 18  
 Monro, Dr. Alexander (secundus), 18  
 Monro, Dr. Alexander (tertius), 18  
 Monro, Alexander, 19, 39  
 Monro, David, 18  
 Monro, David Binny, 19  
 Monro, George, 18  
 Monro, Major George, 19, 37, 240, 253  
 Monro, Henry, 18, 19  
 Monro, John, 18  
 Monro, Miss, 22, 23, 36  
 Monro, Mrs. George, 42  
 Monro, The Honble. Lady, 41, 42, 224, 225, 235, 250-258, 280  
 Mons, 36, 41, 43, 271  
 Montagu, Mr. Edwin, 225, 233, 246, 273  
 Mosul, 164, 167, 170  
 Morley, Lord, 272  
 Mudros, 60, 63, 67, 69, 79, 81, 84, 86, 88, 96, 99, 105  
 Muir, Lieutenant Colonel W. W., 235  
 Murray, General Sir A. J., 40, 104, 280  
 Murray, Rev. J., 37

## N

Nasariyeh, 156, 158, 161  
 Naw Poset, 24  
 Northcliffe, Lord, 63

## O

O'Brien, Lord, 37  
 O'Dwyer, Sir M., 137, 143, 183, 191, 196, 198, 199, 201, 203, 273  
 O'Hagan, The Honble. Mary, 23, 38, 280  
 O'Hagan, Lady, 23, 38  
 O'Hagan, Lord, 38  
 Orr, Captain, 106

## P

Paardeburg, 24  
 Palestine, 53, 55, 164, 165, 172, 175, 248

Paley, Major G., 44  
 Pennington, Major General R., 29, 31-33  
 Perceval, Lieutenant Colonel A. J., 44  
 Peshawar, 225, 227, 230, 232  
 Pétain, Marshal, 49  
 Peyton, General Sir W. E., 76  
 Piggott, Brigadier F. S. G., 260  
 Plumer, Field Marshal Lord, 15, 16, 37, 38  
 Plumer, Lady, 37  
 Poplar Grove, 24, 25  
 Power, Alexander, 18  
 Porter, Sir J., 80  
 Pretymann, General, 23  
 Prichard, Hesketh, 114

## R

Rankin, Sir G., 241  
 Rawlinson, General Lord, 106, 233, 244, 248, 249, 252  
 Razmak, 233  
 Repington, A'Court, Colonel, 109, 140, 151, 159  
 Rice, Mr. W. F., 210  
 Richardson, Lieutenant General Sir C., 153  
 Roberts, Field Marshal Lord, 23, 25, 33, 42, 54, 220, 251  
 Robertson, Lieutenant H. M., 44  
 Robertson, Field Marshal Sir W., 17, 49, 97, 99, 103, 158, 159, 163, 164, 166, 176, 249  
 Ronaldshay, Lord, 254  
 Roos-Keppel, Sir G., 230  
 Ross, Sir John, 37  
 Ruggles-Brise, Sir H., 29, 36  
 Ruwanduz, 157

## S

Salonika, 64, 77, 78, 84, 86, 89, 91, 95, 96, 169, 172, 175  
 Samawa, 159  
 Sanders, Limon von, Marshal, 97  
 Sandhurst R.M.C., 20, 127, 128  
 Sangla, 203  
 Sankaran Nair, Sir, 198  
 Sarraill, General, 95  
 Satyapal, Dr., 194, 195

Saward, Major General H. M., 23,  
24, 26, 31, 259  
Saward, Miss, 24  
Scott, Mr., 182  
Scott, Colonel Lord H., 24, 48, 49,  
62, 63, 105, 106  
Scott, Lieutenant General Sir T.,  
151, 153, 235, 280  
Sheppard, Major General S. H., 217,  
218  
Sherborne School, 19, 20  
Sherwood, Miss, 201, 211  
Shiraz, 154  
Sillem, Major General Sir A., 23  
Simpson, Captain H. V., R.N., 101  
Sistan, 160  
Skeen, General Sir A., 153, 223  
Smith, Sir T., 210  
Smith-Dorrien, General Sir H., 35,  
62  
Spenser, Edmund, 18  
St. Servan, Brittany, 19  
Stewart, Mr., 182  
Suvla, 67, 68, 73, 81, 82, 86, 89, 91,  
92, 95, 96, 99, 101, 104, 266  
Symons, Penn, General, 21

T

Tank, 227, 230  
Thomson, Mr. G. M., 182  
Thomson, Sir C., 80  
Trade Unions, General Federation  
of, 62  
Tralee, 37

Treves, Sir F., 60  
Troutbeck, Lieutenant J., 106

U

Uskub, 64

V

Villiers-Stuart, Lieutenant Colonel  
W. M., 237  
Viramgam, 123

W

Wales, H.R.H. the Prince of, 47  
Watson, Admiral Sir H., 255  
Wazirabad, 203  
Waziristan, 224, 228, 232, 233, 234,  
236, 237, 239, 247  
Wemyss, Admiral Sir R. E., 74, 76,  
90, 92, 98, 100, 101  
Whigham, General Sir R., 44, 280  
Whitehead, Bishop, 205, 206  
Wilson, Field Marshal Sir H., 216,  
252  
Wilson, Colonel Sir S., 106  
Wolseley, Field Marshal Lord, 17,  
60  
Wyschaete-Messines Line, 36

Y

York, T.R.H. the Duke and Duchess  
of, 255  
Ypres, 36, 41, 45, 46









**PRESIDENT'S SECRETARIAT  
LIBRARY.**

*Accn. No.....*

1. Books may be retained for a period not exceeding fifteen days.